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JOHN CROWNE
HIS LIFE AND DRAMATIC WORKS

BY
ARTHUR FRANKLIN WHITE, PH. D.



CLEVELAND
WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY PRESS
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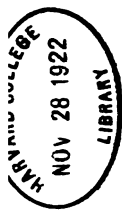
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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY
CLEVELAND



November 25, 1922.

Mr. William C. Lane

William F. White

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PREFACE

It has been my aim in the following pages to give an account of the life and dramatic works of the now little known and less studied Restoration playwright, John Crowne. During the first half of the eighteenth century his name was kept alive by the retention of his best comedy, *Sir Courtly Nice*, in the repertory of the two theatres, but it was not until 1873 that his dramas were accessible to the general public in any form other than the original quartos and the few reprints of his more successful plays. In that year, however, James Maidment and W. H. Logan began the publication of his dramas in four volumes for the series known as "Dramatists of the Restoration". They prefaced their work with a short memoir, and prefixed a brief historical and critical account to each play. Their editorial work is of some value, but it is made up too frequently of digressions upon the noblemen to whom Crowne dedicated his plays. The only considerable scholarly investigation hitherto made is Wilhelm Grosse's monograph, *John Crownes Komödien und burleske Dichtung*, published in 1903. Grosse limited himself to the five extant comedies of Crowne and his two short burlesque poems, and gave only a sketchy account of his life.

My initial reason for undertaking a study of Crowne was the interest which attaches to his three years' residence in America and his attendance at Harvard College from 1657 to 1660. I also hoped to discover some new facts to add to the meagre record of his life, and in this attempt the results have not been entirely barren. Furthermore, no detailed study has ever been made of Crowne's tragedies, though he is as much a tragic poet as a comic dramatist. Accordingly, I have tried to show the relation between these two sides of his literary activity, and from the relation thus established to determine Crowne's true importance to the students of the drama. This lies chiefly, I think, in the fact that his work illustrates all the various types of drama in vogue in his time, and that, since he wrote primarily for a livelihood, his plays are better evidence of contemporary theatrical requirements than the work of men of greater genius. Incidentally I have endeavored to show that in his comedies Crowne is scarcely more moral than the majority of

Restoration comic poets, and that therefore Grosse is mistaken in assuming that his significance in the history of English drama lies in the fact that he is a forerunner of Blackmore, Collier, and Steele in the struggle for more decency on the stage.

The present study consists of three parts. In the first I have endeavored to trace the life of Crowne more minutely than has hitherto been attempted. In the second I have treated of Crowne's plays in the order of their writing. Here it has been my purpose to discuss in connection with each play the date of production and publication, the circumstances connected with the writing, the sources, and the manner in which they are used. Finally, in the third part I have attempted a critical summary of Crowne's tragedies and comedies and an estimate of his importance as a playwright.

In the course of my investigations and in the preparation of this study I have received invaluable assistance for which I wish to express my appreciation. To many of my fellow students at Harvard from 1915 to 1918 I am indebted for references to out-of-the-way material. I owe my thanks also to Mr. William C. Lane, librarian of the Harvard University Library, and to his assistants for many favors extended to me. Dr. William H. Davis of Washington, D. C., and Mr. John H. Edmonds, curator of the Gay Collection in the Widener Library, have very kindly allowed me the use of material in their notebooks concerning the life of William Crowne. I am under obligation likewise to Mr. Albert Matthews of Boston for numerous suggestions, and to Mr. Julius H. Tuttle, acting librarian of the Massachusetts Historical Society for favors extended in the use of the Society's books. I wish to record here also my appreciation of the interest which Mr. Sidney S. Wilson, treasurer of Western Reserve University, has taken in the publication of this monograph, and the kindness of Professor W. H. Hulme of Western Reserve University in reading the proof and in making valuable suggestions. To Dr. William A. Neilson, under whom I began this study, my thanks are due for numerous suggestions in the early phases of my work. Finally, I wish to express my deep appreciation to Professor George L. Kittredge for the great patience and care with which he has read my manuscript and for the helpful and constructive criticism which he has given to me.

A. F. W.

Cleveland, May 17, 1922.

JOHN CROWNE HIS LIFE AND DRAMATIC WORKS

CHAPTER I.

THE LIFE OF JOHN CROWNE.

The life of John Crowne is very obscure. First hand evidence for his boyhood, youth, and young manhood, if not entirely lacking, is limited to two or three documents. With regard to his father, however, we are more fortunate. Colonel William Crowne was a diligent public official during most of the stormy days of the commonwealth; and later, when he took possession of his estate in America, he became a person of note in New England. Thus we are able to trace his life in some detail for many years. Col. Crowne's career during the time of the Parliamentary government gives us a new approach to the early life of his son; with his subsequent purchase of a share in the province of Nova Scotia and with his emigration to the New World is associated our knowledge of the younger Crowne's education; and finally, the loss of that estate enables us to understand the son's choice of play-writing as a profession, and accounts for the bitterness which marks the closing years of his life. I have found it advisable, therefore, to present the life of Col. William Crowne at greater length than would be necessary, were our knowledge of his son accessible through any other channel.

I. THE PLAYWRIGHT'S FATHER.

Concerning William Crowne the father of John Crowne, the dramatist, John Dennis, the critic, made the following statement in a letter dated June 23, 1719, and published two years later in a collection entitled *Original Letters*: "Mr. Crown was bred under his Father, an Independent Minister in that part of Northern America, which is called Nova Scotia."¹ This misstatement was studiously copied by one biographer after another for one hundred and fifty years,² until A. H. Bullen in 1888, in his article on Crowne in the *Dictionary of National Biography* threw doubt upon it, since he found evidence from Colonial papers that William Crowne was

¹ John Dennis, *Original Letters, Familiar, Moral and Critical*, I, 48.

² Theophilus Cibber and others, *The Lives of the Poets*, III, 104; *Biographia Dramatica*, I, pt. I, 157; Sir Egerton Brydges, *Censura Literaria*, Second Edition, VII, 143, Maidment and Logan, *The Dramatic Works of John Crowne*, I, ix-x.

a colonel in the English army.³ A year before, Dr. J. S. H. Fogg had stated in a paper on John Crowne, "I am sure that his father was not a dissenting minister, and equally sure that Maine, and not Nova Scotia, was his birth-place."⁴ Although the latter half of Dr. Fogg's statement is erroneous, he had documentary evidence of the fact that William Crowne was a colonel. Finally in 1891, Professor Archibald MacMechan, working apparently without knowledge of Dr. Fogg's published researches, discovered some documents in the archives of Nova Scotia which threw new light upon the elder Crowne's connection with America, and disproved once for all the statement of Dennis that he was an independent minister.⁵ Thus the matter remained until 1903, when Dr. William H. Davis published a short account of Colonel Crowne which added much to the known facts about him.⁶ I have been able to contribute a number of items of considerable interest as a result of my own researches.

William Crowne was born in England about 1617.⁷ Nothing is known of his extraction or of his education, but in 1636, in his nineteenth year, he was a member of the suite of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, when that nobleman went as Charles I's ambassador extraordinary on a mission to the Emperor Ferdinand II. The party left England on April 6, 1636, and did not arrive again at London until December 27th following. In less than a month after the Earl's party had returned, the youthful William Crowne published a narrative of the embassy, entitled *A true relation of all the remarkable places and passages observed in the travels of Thomas, Lord Howard, earle of Arundell and Surrey, ambassadour extraordinary to Ferdinando II, 1636*. This little volume of seventy odd pages is for the most part a day-by-day account of the places through which the party passed, the dignitaries whom they met, and the sights of interest which they saw—all in a dry, journalistic vein. Our interest in it, however, is biographical rather than literary. It is dedicated "to the true and noble and my honourable master, Master Thomas Howard," the grandson of the Earl of

³ *The Dictionary of National Biography*, 1888, XIII, 243.

⁴ Dr. J. S. H. Fogg, *John Crowne—Dramatist and Poet*, *The Maine Historical and Genealogical Recorder*, IV, 189.

⁵ Archibald MacMechan, *John Crowne, a Biographical Note*. *Modern Language Notes*, VI, col. 277-285.

⁶ Wm. H. Davis, *Colonel William Crowne and his Family*. *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* LVII, 406-410.

⁷ In a deposition concerning some cattle, made in 1667, Wm. Crowne stated that he was about fifty years old. *Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County, Massachusetts*, IV, 2.

Arundel. Crowne refers to the earl in his dedication as "my dred Lord."⁸ In the entry of the work in the register of the Stationers' Company it is recorded as "written by William Crowne gent[leman]. servant to the said Earle."⁹ From these statements we may infer that Crowne was attached to the household of Arundel and perhaps served Master Thomas, the grandson, who was ten years his junior,¹⁰ in some capacity.

In April, 1638, somewhat more than a year after the embassy, Crowne, together with a certain Thomas Addison, was a petitioner to the king for a "letters patent for 14 years, for the sole use of breeding and feeding wild fowls upon sea-creeks and navigable rivers, according to their way and call, with a rent to the king of 20 nobles per annum after the first year."¹¹ The petitioners explain that they have found a new method of breeding and feeding wild fowls, and of snaring them by the sea, "so that the King's subjects may be served with a greater store of fowl at more reasonable rates than they be now sold at." The attorney-general was ordered to draw up a patent, but nothing more is heard of it.

Whatever Crowne's previous service to the Howards may have been, he somehow won the favor of the old Earl, and in the autumn of 1638 was created Rouge-Dragon by him. Chancellor, in his history of Richmond, quotes an interesting document giving an account of the ceremony, but does not mention its source. It runs as follows:

"24th Septemb., 1638, at the Red Lyon Tavern or Inn, was created [William] Crowne into the place and office of Rouge Dragon Pursuivant of Arms in Ordinary, in manner followinge:

"The Earle Marshall beeing satt in his Chaire, divers Justices of the Peace & Gent: of quality beeing there present, all of them bare—The 3 King's of Arms, viz.: Sr. John Borow, Garter, Sr. Wm. Le Neve, Clarenceuse, and Sr. Henry St. George, Norroy Kinges of Arms, making their obeisances (beeing in their Coates of Arms), went and stood by the Earle Marshall; then was brought in Mr. Crowne, Mr. Owen, Yorke, bearing the coate of Arms, Mr. Maneringe, Richmond, bearing a bowle of Wine, and Mr. Walker, Chester Herald, bearing his Lrs. Patent, went before him. After 3 obeisances made then

⁸ William Crowne, *A True Relation* . . . London, 637. See the dedication, and pp. 1 and 70.

⁹ Edward Arber, *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640*, IV, 344. Crowne's narrative was entered on Jan. 21, 1637.

¹⁰ See *Dictionary of National Biography* under Henry Frederick Howard.

¹¹ *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, 1637-38*, p. 363.

kneeled Mr. Crowne at the Earle Marshall's feete—then kneeled Chester deliveringe the Lrs. Patent to my Lord Marshall, who gave it to Chester to reade, and at the word 'Investimus' the Coate of Arms was put on Mr. Crowne, and at the word 'Creamus' Richmond kneeled, giving to my Lord the bowle of Wine, who at the pronouncinge of the said word Creamus poured the Wine on his head, giving him the name (Rouge Dragon). After the Lrs. Patent reade, then Garter gave him his Oath which done, after a brief exortation given by my Lord Marshall to Mr. Crowne and delivering him his Letters Patent, he ris and stood in his Coate of Arms neere the Kinges of Armes who went out of the roome to bring in Mr. Dugdale

."¹²

At some time between 1635 and 1640, and most probably after his creation as Rouge Dragon in September, 1638, William Crowne married Agnes, daughter of Richard Mackworth of Betton Strange, County Salop.¹³ She was the widow of Richard Watts of London, the son of Sir John Watts, an alderman and Lord Mayor in 1606; and her former husband had died on the "Thursday before Whitsuntide," 1635.¹⁴

Nothing is known of Crowne in the years immediately following his marriage, but at the outbreak of the Civil War he allied himself with the parliamentary cause. In 1644 he was serving Basil Fielding, Earl of Denbigh, in the capacity of secretary.¹⁵ Denbigh was commander-in-chief of the parliamentary forces in the associated counties of Warwick, Worcester, Stafford and Salop, where after considerable delay he had achieved some victories in the spring of 1644.¹⁶ In July, 1644, Crowne was in London requesting "more strength and money for Lord Denbigh."¹⁷ Incidentally he discovered certain intrigues which were in progress in Worcestershire to remove Denbigh from command,¹⁸ and suggested that the latter come to London himself. At this time Denbigh and his officers were

¹² Edwin B. Chancellor, *Historical Richmond*, pp. 166-169. Wilhelm Grosse, *John Crownes Komödien und burleske Dichtung*, p. 6, was inclined to doubt the assertion of Oldys that Wm. Crowne was Rouge Dragon. The office of Rouge Dragon was created by Henry VII upon the vigil of his coronation "in memory of the banner bearing this device upon it, which he had at Bosworth, painted upon white and green silk." By virtue of being created to this office Crowne became a gentleman (if he was not one before) and was entitled to armorial bearings. His letters patent are dated Sept. 14, 1638. Cf. Mark Noble, *A History of the College of Arms*, pp. 70, 93-94, 251.

¹³ Thos. Blore, *History of the Antiquities of the County of Rutland*, p. 226.

¹⁴ Robt. Clutterbuck, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Hertford*, III, 305.

¹⁵ Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, *Fourth Report*, 1874, p. 267.

¹⁶ See *Dict. Nat. Biog.* under Basil Fielding.

¹⁷ Royal Commission on Historical MSS., *Fourth Report*, p. 269.

¹⁸ Henry T. Weyman, *The Members of Parliament from Bridgnorth, Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, 4th Series, V, 60. The statement is derived from J. Willis-Bund, *Civil War in Worcestershire*, p. 139, which I have been unable to see.

charged with malpractice by the Shropshire committee, and Denbigh threatened to cudgel Humphrey Mackworth, a member of the committee, for a remark impugning the courage of his men. In an abstract of the charges, brought before the Council of State in December, 1649, five years after the events, there is this statement: "He [Denbigh] also told Wm. Crowne, his secretary, upon hearing that Mackworth had come up, that he hoped he would keep out of his sight; and upon Crowne replying he surely would not right himself in such a way upon him, he answered he scorned to do it himself, but others should" ¹⁹ Crowne had reason for pouring oil upon the troubled waters, since Denbigh was his employer and Humphrey Mackworth his brother-in-law. Denbigh cleared himself of the charges, of which the 1649 abstract of evidence was only a faint echo. Crowne seems also to have been in the employ of a committee of Parliament during part of the summer of 1644, since he was intrusted with four letters for the west by the body. ²⁰ Apparently he continued his services as secretary until the end of the summer of 1645, for there exists a "copy of Lord Denbigh's undertaking to pay Wm. Crowne, his late secretary, 100 l. Sept. 20, 1645." ²¹ The relations between Denbigh and his late secretary continued cordial, however, as there is a record of Crowne's sending from Salop on Oct. 31, 1645 "two boxes of Shrewsbury cakes as a token of esteem from his sister, Mackworth." ²² In 1646, as Rouge Dragon and a member of the College of Arms, he attended the funeral of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, on Sept. 15th. ²³ The next year he was employed in some government work in Shropshire, since he is mentioned in a letter of Sept. 13, 1647, as desiring his fees. ²⁴ In 1648 he was a lieutenant-colonel in the service of Parliament. His particular task was to discover delinquents and their estates in counties Stafford and Salop. ²⁴ It is likely that he continued at this work for the next two years.

With the beginning of the new decade William Crowne assumed a position of more prominence in the military and political

¹⁹ *State Papers, Domestic*, 1649-50, p. 444. Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 406, misinterpreted the statement quoted above, and wrote that Crowne was secretary to Humphrey Mackworth.

²⁰ *State Papers, Domestic*, 1644, pp. 354-355.

²¹ *Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts*, 4th Report, pp. 272-273.

²² Noble, *A History of the College of Arms*, p. 255; Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 406, says Crowne was one of the seven members of the heraldry college to attend the funeral in 1647, but *State Papers, Domestic*, 1645-47, pp. 468-469, gives the date of the funeral as Sept. 15, 1646.

²³ *State Papers, Domestic*, 1625-49, p. 708.

²⁴ *Calendar of the Committee for Advance of Money*, 1642-56, Pt. I, pp. 67, 69, 843.

affairs of Shropshire. On April 2, 1650, he was made a captain of militia for county Salop, and on Aug. 15th, he was chosen one of the commissioners of militia for the county. Almost immediately upon the heels of this last appointment, he was advanced to be a lieutenant-colonel of militia under Col. Humphrey Mackworth.²⁵ On March 2, 1650, Col. Mackworth wrote to Col. Godfrey Bosville, M. P.: "I beg to request that my brother [Wm.] Crowne may be intrusted as one of the commissioners for co. Salop, where he lives."²⁶ The appointment followed in June, and Crowne became chairman at once. Several months later he was made treasurer of the accounts of the committee, and in November he was ordered to attend a meeting of the Committee for Compounding to hear charges against a certain Kendrick. He served as county commissioner for Salop for about four years; in fact, until the office was abolished by act of Parliament.²⁷ When the old committee was eliminated, some difficulty arose between the late county commissioners and the Committee for Sequestration. On March 14, 1654, this committee annulled all county commissions and directed the commissioners to deliver up their papers.²⁸ A fortnight later Col. Crowne wrote to the Committee for Sequestration that the accounts were delayed because he had to attend on the bench at the assizes. On April 18, 1654, he addressed one of the committee as follows: "I have now come up, being sent from our county to his Highness on a business of concern and am daily in attendance, so that for a few days I can not attend you."²⁹ On May 15th Crowne's accounts were being delayed further because those of his fellow commissioner were not complete;³⁰ but at the end of July the Commissioners for Sequestration were not satisfied and wrote him thus: "We hear that you say all the moneys are paid into the Treasury, but our auditor gives a certificate which makes us marvel at your suggestion therein. We respect you, but . . . we plainly tell you that we cannot give you any commission till your accounts are perfected and moneys paid." Thereupon follows a threat in case of failure to comply.³¹ Crowne turned in some accounts, but they were still unsatisfactory; and when a certain Mr. Prowd came

²⁵ *State Papers, Domestic*, 1650, pp. 288, 505, 509.

²⁶ *Calendar of the Committee for Compounding*, 1643-60, Pt. I, p. 180.

²⁷ For references to his continuous service, see *Ibid.*, 463, 584, 617, 630.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 672.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 680.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 683.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 693.

for the sequestration books, he refused to give them up. The commissioners then wrote, "Let them be delivered within 14 days, or we shall be put to unpleasant means for their recovery." This threat was sufficient, for at the end of another month Prowd reported the delivery of the books.⁸²

While William Crowne was involved in these unpleasant relations with the Commissioners for Sequestration, he was returned as the sole member of Parliament for Bridgnorth in 1654. When, in the following year, there was an attempt by the Royalists to surprise Shrewsbury castle, a commission was sent by Lord Protector Cromwell to Col. Crowne to raise a regiment of infantry in Shropshire in order to protect the town.⁸³ Cromwell's commission reached Crowne on March 7th, and in order to forestall an attack on the next day, he hurriedly raised a force of fifty horse and foot among his friends, and kept them at his own expense for ten days until relief arrived. Several months later he petitioned Cromwell for a reimbursement of his expenses: "Having acted for your honour and the people's care, and done my best to secure the town and country, I beg 37 l., and my own charge and expense I leave to your pleasure."⁸⁴ After Col. Mackworth had certified Crowne's statement, a warrant was issued for the payment nearly a year later.⁸⁵ In January, 1656, Col. Crowne was still assisting in discovering delinquents in Shropshire.⁸⁶ It is possible that he was then a Commissioner for Sequestration for the county.⁸⁷

The year 1656 was one of more than usual significance in the life of John Crowne's father and in his own, for in that year the elder Crowne tied up his fortunes and the wealth which he had accumulated as an industrious servant for the commonwealth in a venture in the new world. In order to explain the manner in

⁸² *Ibid.*, 713, 718, 719.

⁸³ H. T. Weyman, *op. cit.*, p. 60. Cromwell's commission is as follows: "The Protector to Col. Wm. Crowne. It being justly apprehended that the Cavalier party intends speedy execution of a very evil design in the parts of Shrewsbury, which they specially intend because of the weakness of the garrison, and the multitude of malignants thereabouts, I send you down commissions for a regiment, which you are to command for protection of the honest party, and securing of Shrewsbury garrison. You are to repair thither, and advise with your friends about this and other instructions which I have given to the governor there, to whom I have lately sent a troop of horse.

P. S.—I also send you a commission for a troop. Whitehall, 5 March 1654-55." Cf. *State Papers, Domestic*, 1655, pp. 259-260.

⁸⁴ *State Papers, Domestic*, 1655, p. 259.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 1655-56, pp. 300, 588.

⁸⁶ *Calendar of the Committee for Compounding*, 1643-60, Pt. I, p. 735.

⁸⁷ J. E. Auden, *Shropshire and the Royalist Conspiracies . . . 1648-1660. Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, 3rd Series, X, 140, speaks of Wm. Crowne as a "Commissioner of Sequestration for Shropshire at the time of the threatened Royalist uprising in 1655."

which William Crowne came to be a joint proprietor in the province of Nova Scotia, it will be necessary for us to retrace our steps for a few years. In 1654 Major Robert Sedgewick, under orders from Cromwell, sailed to Nova Scotia and took possession of it as an ancient part of the English dominion. It was then in the hands of Sir Charles de la Tour, who had inherited the estate from his father, Sir Claud de St. Etienne. The province had originally been granted in 1621 by James I to Sir William Alexander, Lord of Menstrue, but the latter had made it over under date of April 30, 1630, to Sir Claud de St. Etienne. The dispossessed Charles de la Tour went to London and petitioned Cromwell for the return of his estate.³⁸ According to MacMechan's investigations, Cromwell's council was not prepared to favor de la Tour's petition, because he was a Frenchman, until he interested Col. Thomas Temple in a partnership. Temple was a nephew of Lord Fiennes, a member of the council, and since he was suspected of Royalist leanings, his uncle advised him to leave the country and seek to mend his fortunes in America.³⁹ Before the patent could be procured, however, a debt of De la Tour's had to be paid—a sum of 3379 l., which he owed to the widow Margaret Gibbons.⁴⁰ As neither Temple nor De la Tour had the necessary funds, they interested William Crowne in the matter, and by advancing the amount he became their joint partner.⁴¹ On May 29, 1656, the Council of State approved of the joint petition of De la Tour, Temple, and Crowne, and ordered a patent to be granted after the performance of the conditions of the debt. On July 14th articles of agreement were drawn up, and about a month later, on August 9th, the patent was granted.⁴² For a financial consideration De la Tour gave up his title to Temple and Crowne on September 20, 1656.⁴³

The new proprietors of Nova Scotia came to America in the summer of 1657. Crowne was still in England on April 28th, but on September 12th an agreement was made between Temple and Crowne in Boston, New England. Crowne is described in the articles as "late of the Parish of Martins in the field in the Countie of Middlesexe."⁴⁴ On this occasion the two proprietors

³⁸ James P. Baxter, *Documentary History of the State of Maine*, X, 25-27.

³⁹ MacMechan, *op. cit.*, col. 279.

⁴⁰ *State Papers, Colonial*, 1574-1660, p. 441.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 1661-68, p. 597.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 1574-1660, pp. 441, 444, 447.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 453.

⁴⁴ *Suffolk County (Massachusetts) Registry of Deeds*, III, 108.

divided their property, Col. Crowne getting "that Tract of Land within the Territories of Accadie or Nova Scotia which lyeth westward from the mouth of the River Damache alias Machias . . . and so all along the westward bancke of the said River . . . as the said River Runneth into the Countrey one hundred Leagues, and extendeth Westward all along Muscontus Scittuate on the confines of New England . . . with all the Islands Rivers Riveletts Lakes Piscaries houses fforts and in particular the fort at Pentagonet or Ponobscot" ⁴⁵ Each party to the agreement gave a bond of twenty thousand pounds, which was recorded in Boston on February 18, 1658.

Crowne went at once to his new possession and built a trading house "far up ye river of Penobscot, at a place called Negue; to which he gave his owne name, and called it Crownes point." But when later Temple learned of his thriving beaver trade, he pretended that Crowne had broken some article of their agreement and seized the fort at Penobscot, the trading house at Negue, and all of his lands. Col. Crowne attempted to get justice in the courts of New England without avail. Such is the account which John Crowne gave of his father's difficulties with Temple in a memorial prepared in 1698. ⁴⁶ In a petition dated 1666, however, Col. Crowne himself had given a somewhat different version of his troubles. "About six years since," i. e., in 1660, he offered to lease his property to Temple, but the latter refused it, and he leased it for several years to Capt. Corwin and Ensign Scottoe at 110 *l.* per annum. The lessees and Temple fell out, as Crowne believed, because the former had cleared a handsome profit of 300 *l.* in one year; thereupon Temple forced Crowne to lease the land to him for four years at the same rental. The rent was secured by the bonds of Breed and Usher, Boston merchants, and they paid the first year; but after that Col. Crowne could get no satisfaction, even in the courts. ⁴⁷ He was in Boston in the winter of 1658 and during most of 1659, and on May 30, 1660, he was made a freeman of the town. ⁴⁸

⁴⁵ *Suffolk County (Massachusetts) Registry of Deeds*, III, 108.

⁴⁶ John Crowne's memorial concerning Penobscot in 1698. Reprinted by J. P. Baxter, *op. cit.*, X, 27-28.

⁴⁷ J. H. Metcalf, *Annals of the Town of Mendon*, pp. 27-28. Dr. Davis, p. 407, states that Crowne leased this land to Corwin and Scottoe on Nov. 1, 1658.

⁴⁸ In a petition dated July 10, 1682 Crowne stated that he had wintered in Boston for two years previous to his journey to England early in 1661. Cf. Metcalf, p. 31. He witnessed deeds in Boston on April 9, and July 26, 1659. Cf. *Suffolk Deeds*, III, 222, 261. For his election as freeman of Boston see *The Records of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay in New England*, edited by Natl. B. Shurtleff, IV, Pt. 1, 461.

With the restoration of Charles II in 1660, the claim of Crowne and Temple to their grant of Nova Scotia by "the usurper" Cromwell was jeopardized. Thomas Elliott, one of the grooms of the bedchamber to Charles II, petitioned his master for a grant of the province.⁴⁹ Sir Lewis Kirke and the widow of Sir William Alexander also petitioned for it, and in 1661 the French ambassador claimed it for France.⁵⁰ Knowledge of these developments came to Crowne and Temple, and on December 24, 1660, the latter wrote to England stating that he was sending a petition by Colonel Crowne to the king in the name of the three original grantees, De la Tour, Temple, and Crowne. Colonel Crowne had arrived in England and presented the petition by March 1st.⁵¹ On June 22, 1661, he submitted a statement of the manner in which he and Temple became proprietors.⁵² Temple himself arrived in England shortly before the end of February, 1662, and at once prepared an answer to the claim of the French ambassador.⁵³ He also secured the suspension of Thomas Breedon as governor of Nova Scotia. Later, however, he was forced to pay Breedon 500 l. per annum in order to retain control of the province.⁵⁴

Colonel Crowne's departure for England at the beginning of 1661 was occasioned, no doubt, by the complications arising out of the various claims then being made to the province of which he was in part proprietor; but the journey was made necessary also by the duty imposed upon him as Rouge Dragon to be present at the coronation. In the previous year he had been one of the citizens of Boston to welcome the regicides, Whaley and Goffe; but as Dr. Davis has pointed out, Hutchinson was mistaken in calling him a "noted Royalist."⁵⁵ Noble remarks that among the legitimate members of the College of Arms "who had started aside from their duty," Crowne "was permitted to retain his office."⁵⁶ He took part in the coronation ceremonies as Rouge Dragon on April 23, 1661; but he soon resigned the office, and on May 25th it was granted to

⁴⁹ *State Papers, Colonial*, 1574-1660, p. 484.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 1574-1660, pp. 484, 493, 497; *Ibid.*, 1661-68, p. 66. Cf. MacMechan, *op. cit.*, col. 280.

⁵¹ *State Papers, Colonial*, 1574-1660, pp. 496-497.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 1661-68, p. 39.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

⁵⁵ [Thomas] Hutchinson, *The History of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay from 1628-1691*. 2nd edition, p. 208; Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 407. Saml. Jennison, *William and John Crowne, New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, VI, 47, repeats Hutchinson's error; and Grosse, referring to his article, says, p. 7, "Crownes Vater war ein treuer Anhänger der Königspartei."

⁵⁶ Noble, *op. cit.*, p. 268.

Francis Sandford.⁵⁷ About this time Colonel Crowne was busily engaged in an endeavor to make the new royal government more kindly disposed towards the Massachusetts Bay Colony, which had been frowned upon because of its cruelty to Quakers. The success of his efforts is seen in a letter of July 1661 from Lord Say and Seale to the governor of the colony. "Mr. Crowne . . . hath appeared," he wrote, "both here in the council and to the Lord Chamberlain and others as really and cordially for you as any one could do, and had allayed the ill opinion of your cruelty against the quakers, willingly neglected his passage to stay here to serve you . . . wherefore I must request you will really own and accordingly requite Mr. Crowne his love, care and pains for you, of which I have been an eye witness."⁵⁸ The Colonel was still in London in December, 1661, in the interests of the colony,⁵⁹ and must have remained there for some months longer, as Governor Endicott addressed a letter to him on February 7, 1661-62, desiring his "farther favor" on behalf of the colony. He explained that Mr. Norton and Mr. Bradstreet had been appointed by the General Court to appear before the king, but because of Norton's illness, they "are necessitated to send without them."⁶⁰

As a reward for his services, the General Court passed a resolution on October 8, 1662, as follows:

"This Court as an acknowledgment of the great paines of Coll Wm Croune in behalfe of his country when he was in England, judge meete to graunt him five hundred acres of land in any place not legally disposed of."⁶¹

The land was laid out in 1663 "at a place neere the cold spring, neere vnto the roade wch leadeth from Sudbury vnto Conecticot."⁶²

Meanwhile the difficulties between Temple and Crowne continued. According to the 1698 memorial of John Crowne, which we must accept with reservations as a one-sided account, his father threatened to complain to the king and Privy Council, but Temple quieted him by promising restitution of his lands and reparation

⁵⁷ *State Papers, Domestic*, 1660-61, p. 595. MacMechan, col. 281, implies that Crowne was made Rouge Dragon under Charles II, after Temple had been granted a patent for Nova Scotia in his own name, but as we have seen, Crowne held the office from 1638.

⁵⁸ Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, p. 220; Metcalf, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

⁵⁹ *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 5th Series, I, 394.

⁶⁰ Letter of Gov. Endicott to Col. Crowne dated Feb. 7, 1661, quoted by Metcalf, p. 25, from *Massachusetts Archives, Political*, CVI, p. 50. Metcalf assumes that the date is 1661, but Palfrey, *History of New England*, II, 521, note 2, is right in dating it 1661-62.

⁶¹ *The Records of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay in New England*, IV, Pt. 2, pp. 60-61.

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 150-151.

for his wrongs. When, therefore, Crowne returned to New England, Temple gave him letters to his agents in America bidding them restore the fort at Penobscot and his lands; but when Crowne arrived he found that Temple's agents had been advised by other letters to keep him out. Upon the return of Temple to Nova Scotia, after he had secured the grant in his own name, his former partner complained of this shameful treatment. Yet he finally leased Penobscot for a short period to Temple, and several New England merchants were bound for the payment of the rent; but no rent was ever paid and the colonial courts refused to interfere, alleging that the case was outside their jurisdiction. Thus matters continued until 1667, when by the treaty of Breda Charles II returned Nova Scotia to the French and Temple was ordered to surrender it.⁶³

It has been stated repeatedly that William Crowne died in the same year in which his property in Penobscot was ceded to the French by royal decree, and only recently has investigation established the error of the statement. J. G. Palfrey seems to be responsible for the mistake. In his *History of New England* he wrote: "We have the record of his death in Massachusetts 'in 1667, aged 50',"⁶⁴ basing his information upon an entry in a compilation of statistics concerning "Early Settlers of Essex and Old Norfolk": "Croun (Crown) Col. William, ae. 50 in 1667."⁶⁵ This brief record in turn owes its origin to a deposition, already referred to, in which Col. Crowne, testifying concerning some cattle, states his age as "about fifty years."⁶⁶ MacMechan and Grosse both accepted Palfrey's statement as correct;⁶⁷ but as we shall see, the ~~elder~~ Crowne did not die until fifteen years later.

In the years immediately following Crowne's return to New England, he was probably a resident either of Boston or Roxbury,⁶⁸ but in 1667 he joined with a group of townsmen in settling Mendon. On April 2, 1667, he was nominated "to enter the Public Acts respecting Mendon from the beginning of the Plantation to this

⁶³ The 1698 memorial of John Crowne, J. P. Baxter, *op. cit.*, X, 28-29. See also *State Papers, Colonial*, 1661-68, p. 520. Temple did not surrender the province until 1670, and John Crowne later claims that he gave up Penobscot contrary to his instructions.

⁶⁴ J. G. Palfrey, *op. cit.*, II, 287, note 4.

⁶⁵ *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, VI, 249.

⁶⁶ *Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County (Mass.)* IV, 2.

⁶⁷ MacMechan, col. 281; Grosse, p. 8.

⁶⁸ On Oct. 29, 1665 he was chosen as Job Tyler's man in a suit. See *Essex Records*, *op. cit.*, III, 442. Tyler was then a resident of Roxbury.

time," and on June 7th he was elected first town register.⁶⁹ Two years later, on May 27, 1669, the General Court granted the petition of Mendon that Col. Crowne be empowered to give the constable his oath and to solemnize marriage.⁷⁰ Here he continued to reside for several years, and was chosen annually as a selectman in the years between 1667 and 1673.⁷¹ His name is not among the list of selectmen chosen at the beginning of 1673, and there is reason to believe that he ceased to be a constant resident about this time; for on May 7th the General Court, finding that there was no magistrate near Mendon, appointed another man to the office.⁷² In the following year difficulties of some sort arose between Col. Crowne and the townspeople of Mendon, and on April 28, 1674, the General Court issued the following order:

"This Court taking into consideration that Collonell William Crowne hath lived here a considerable time from his wife judge meete to Order that the said Colonell do take passage for England & return thither to his wife by the next opportunity of Shipping after these ships that are now ready to sail under penalty of twenty pounds according to law."⁷³

He did not return to England, however, but fled to Rhode Island: and on September 4th following, the townsfolk of Mendon record "a Loving agrement between the Colonell and ourselves."⁷⁴ During this period Crowne continued to hold his property in the town and he gave it as his residence as late as November 25, 1674.⁷⁵

With the outbreak of King Philip's War in 1675, the Colonel removed to Prudence Island near Newport, where he resided until hostilities were over. Shortly after, he went to visit his son, Henry, who was living in New Castle, New Hampshire.⁷⁶ By the middle

⁶⁹ Metcalf, *op. cit.*, pp. 12, 16.

⁷⁰ *Records of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay in New England*, IV, Pt. 2, 434. See Metcalf, p. 41, for the full answer to the petition.

⁷¹ Metcalf, pp. 16, 31, 37, 47, 54.

⁷² Metcalf, pp. 56-57.

⁷³ A MS. record of the Suffolk County Court in the Boston Athenaeum. I am indebted to Mr. John H. Edmonds, curator of the Gay Collection in Harvard College Library, for this reference and for other valuable information about William Crowne.

⁷⁴ Metcalf, p. 60.

⁷⁵ Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 408; *Suffolk Deeds*, IX, 207-208.

⁷⁶ Petition of June 10, 1682. Metcalf, p. 30. Henry Crowne, the younger brother of the playwright, was born in England about 1648. He was a witness in a divorce case in Boston on Jan. 16, 1668 (*Suffolk County Court Files*, 913), and according to the investigations of Dr. Davis, he was living at Portsmouth, New Hampshire in 1672. In 1676 he married Alice Rogers by whom he had five children. His occupation was that of an inn-keeper in 1682 when he was allowed "to keep a house of public entertainment." (*Collections of the New Hampshire Historical Society*, VIII, 77.) The previous September (1681) he had been "fined 20s. for allowing unlawful games such as billiards, and tables in his house." (*State Papers, Colonial*, 1681-85, p. 120). He was an attorney and notary public, and there are records of his serving frequently on juries. He died between May and September, 1696. Dr. Davis, p. 408, says the elder Crowne visited his son in the winter of 1678-79.

of August, 1679, he had again become a resident of Boston, and there presumably he lived during the few remaining years of his life.⁷⁷ Once more, however, before he had ended his days, the elder Crowne made an effort to secure compensation from the government in England for the loss of his estate along the Penobscot as a result of the treaty of Breda and the malice of Temple. In 1679 he directed his son John in London to petition for Mounthope near the Plymouth settlements, and later for Boston Neck in the Narragansett country, by way of reparation for his losses; but those petitions and the subsequent efforts of his heir to secure a just settlement are rather a part of the life of the playwright and will be treated later. After he took up his residence in Boston in 1679, Col. Crowne began to dispose of his land in Mendon, apparently as a means of subsistence.⁷⁸ "An for yt 500 acres of Land yt ye General Court granted me," he wrote in his petition of June 10, 1682, "considering ye charges in looking it out and laying it out and ye Indians demanding pay for it of me, all things considered, it will be little worth to me." In the same petition he dwells upon his physical condition: "And God having laid his hand heavy on me these 7 or 8 months hath brought me so low yt I am scarce able to stir out of my bed." On July 13th following the General Court voted him five pounds,⁷⁹ and on October 11th "the Court having perved Colonel Wm. Crowne his peticon in all respects, and considering in the season mentioned his service to & for the country together wth his condition, judge meet to order the Treasurer of the country to pay him, as a recompence for the same, fiuteene pounds money, defaulting the fiue pounds the council lent him, to be returned."⁸⁰ A generous court, indeed!

The aged Colonel was steadily growing feebler, and on December 24, 1682, he made his will, which is as follows:

"William Crowne, Esqr. being very weake in body but of sound minde and memory and lookeing for my change every day to bee received to glory wch God hath given me some good comfort of. Thinking fitting to Set down how I would have my Estate disposed of when I am dead: As concerning wt his Majtie hath pleased to promise to give me concerning the delivering of my right up to the French in Nova Scotia,

⁷⁷ *Suffolk Deeds*, XI, 208-209; XII, 49, 75-76.

⁷⁸ *Idem*.

⁷⁹ Metcalf, p. 30.

⁸⁰ *The Records of the Colony of Mass. Bay in New Eng.*, V, 378.

my son John being prosecuting of it of the King, whatsoever his Majtie doth bestow on me, I give him the one half; as also the bond of Four hundred and Forty pounds the halfe of that. And for my Son Henry I leave to him the money that is oweing me from William Allen of Prudence Island by order of the Town Councill of Portsmouth; and also the moiety of wt the Towne of Mendham owes me wch is neer forty pounds, and also the Moity of wt five hundred Acres of Land shalbee Sould for lying neer Sudbury. And for the ten pounds wch the General Court hath ordered me shalbee to defray the charges of my buriall if I dye suddenly: and as for my Bedding with appurt thereunto I give to Sarah Covell if Shee continue with me till I dye, and for her babe Dorothy I give her ten Shillings in money as also her daughter Sara the like, all my wearing apparell I give to my son Henry. And the Remainder of my Estate the whole being by my Son John and Henry I give to my children my daughter Agnes haveing a double part. And this I do declare to be my last will and Testimony revoking all former. As for the debt I owe wch is seven pounds to that worthy man Mr. Hull I desire he may be paid out of wt I have oweing, the profits of my above mencon'd Lands and debts. I do appoint my Son Hary to bee my Executor. Unto wch I have put my hand this twenty fourth day of December in the years 1682.

Willi: Crowne."⁸¹

Col. Crowne was dead by February 26, 1683, for on that date the will was probated and Sarah Covell acknowledged the receipt from Henry Crowne of her share in the benefaction. As we glance over the facts of his life which have come down to us, we find that he was an energetic, God-fearing man who won the respect of his fellows under the commonwealth in England, and of the hardy Puritans of New England. He could not match the knavery of Thomas Temple with like shrewdness, and sought in vain to get justice for his claims. If he appears to have been frequently in the courts of law, we must remember that the records from which we have reconstructed his life are mainly legal and official in nature.

It has been necessary to dwell thus minutely upon the life of Colonel William Crowne in order that, with it as a background, we may fathom the more obscure recesses of the life of his eldest son John, the Restoration playwright. It is only through the activities of his father that we shall be able to make clear in any measure the early life and education of John Crowne, and the attempts which absorbed the later years of his life to recover his disputed patrimony.

⁸¹ *Suffolk County (Mass.) Probate*, VI, 401.

II. BIRTH, CHILDHOOD, AND EDUCATION

John Crowne was the eldest of the three children of William Crowne and Agnes Mackworth Crowne. His parents were married, as we have seen, probably at a date subsequent to the creation of his father as Rouge Dragon in the autumn of 1638. His mother, Agnes, was the daughter of Richard Mackworth of Betton Strange, County Salop, who had married Dorothy, the daughter of Lawrence Cranage of County Stafford on October 29, 1600. Agnes was the third child of this union and was probably born about 1617, since her elder sister Margaret was baptized on July 1, 1615, and her father died in 1617.⁸² She had one brother, Humphrey, who, as we have had occasion to note, was prominent in the political affairs of Shropshire during the early years of the Civil War. He was a colonel in the services of Parliament and was appointed governor of Shrewsbury in 1646. He was later one of the Lord Protector's council, and when he died in 1654, he was buried in Westminster Abbey. After the Restoration, however, his remains were dug up and desecrated.⁸³ Concerning John Crowne's mother we have no other information except the fact that she was first married to Richard Watts of Hertfordshire, who died in 1635. Besides her eldest son John, she had two other children,—Henry, who was born about 1648, and a daughter Agnes. The only evidence concerning Agnes Crowne which I have been able to find is contained in her father's will, where she is given a double share in a part of the estate. Col. Crowne's wife did not accompany him to America: she was alive presumably in 1674 when the Colonel was ordered to "return to his wife" in England,⁸⁴ but how long she lived we are unable to say.

The place of John Crowne's birth has been a matter of dispute. As we have seen, Dennis wrote that he "was bred under his Father . . . in that part of Northern America, which is called Nova Scotia."⁸⁵ The editor of the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* in 1851 recalled the letter of Dennis somewhat vaguely, but he drew the natural conclusion when he wrote, "It is somewhere asserted that Mr. Crowne was born in Nova

⁸² *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, 2nd Series, I, 392.

⁸³ Thomas Blore, *History of Rutland*, p. 129. Cf. also Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, II, 371.

⁸⁴ See above, p. 19.

⁸⁵ Dennis, I, 48.

Scotia."⁸⁶ In 1888 Dr. J. S. H. Fogg stated correctly enough that William Crowne was not a dissenting minister, but he added concerning John that he was "equally sure that Maine and not Nova Scotia was his birthplace."⁸⁷ Three years later Professor MacMechan concluded from evidence which we shall give presently that the younger Crowne "certainly could not have been born in America."⁸⁸ Yet in reviewing this article Grosse remarks: "Die starre Behauptung MacMechans, dass Crowne sicher nicht in Amerika geboren sei, entbehrt eines überzeugenden Beweises."⁸⁹ The convincing proof which has apparently been wanting hitherto, I can now supply. It will be recalled that William Crowne was married to Agnes Macworth at some time between 1635 and 1640,⁹⁰ and most likely after September 1638. From that time until 1657 his life in England can be traced with some approach at detail. The life of the elder Crowne contains no evidence that he considered America as a place of residence until 1656, when by one of the turns of fortune he became interested in the province of Nova Scotia. We can state, therefore, with considerable degree of finality that John Crowne was *not* born in America, and that he *was* born in England,—in what county we do not know, but probably Shropshire, where the family estate of his mother was located, and where his father was serving as secretary to Lord Denbigh in 1644. If this supposition be correct, County Salop may claim two of the Restoration dramatists, since it has long been known that William Wycherley was born in Shropshire. Unfortunately such of the parish registers of Shropshire as have been published fail to confirm our inference, but many of them are incomplete for this period and many doubtless have been destroyed.

The date of Crowne's birth has likewise been a matter of uncertainty. Gosse placed it at about 1640,⁹¹ and MacMechan, on the basis of Crowne's attendance at Harvard College between 1657 and 1660, accepted the same date.⁹² Gosse comes to a different conclusion. In the dedication to his first literary effort, a prose romance, entitled *Pandion and Amphigeneia* and published in January 1665, Crowne wrote: "I was scarcely 20 years of age when

⁸⁶ *The New Eng. Hist. and Geneal. Register*, V, 308.

⁸⁷ J. S. H. Fogg, *op. cit.*, IV, 189.

⁸⁸ MacMechan, col. 282.

⁸⁹ Grosse, p. 7.

⁹⁰ Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 406.

⁹¹ Edmund Gosse, *A History of Eighteenth Century Literature*, p. 58.

⁹² MacMechan, col. 282.

I fancied it." On the basis of this statement Grosse concludes, "Somit ist das Jahr 1645 mit Bestimmtheit als das seiner Geburt anzusetzen."⁹³ Without further evidence one might be inclined to doubt this conclusion in view of Crowne's own statement. He may well have "fancied" his romance when he was little more than twenty, but that is not to say that the result of his fancies impressed the printers of London immediately and that they were straightway spread upon the uncompromising printed page. On the other hand, it is much more likely that a youth newly returned from the Puritan settlements of New England, and left behind by his father without influential friends in London, would find considerable difficulty and expend much time in persuading a printer to publish his romantic fancies and youthful dreams. It is not necessary, however, to rely upon such reasoning to prove Grosse's conclusion erroneous. In a deposition made in 1660 John Crowne himself testifies to his age. I shall quote the entire document.

"John Croune aged about twenty yeares testifieth & saith. That he was sent by his ffather Colln: William Croune to receive sattisfaction for a bill of seventeen pounds and twelve shillings, which my ffather gaue me, charged by mr. Roger Spencer as he told me vpon mr. Robert Jordan bearing date the 17th of July 1658, vnto which Joshua Scottow his name was subscribed as a witness, and this deponent did then shew mr. Robert Jordan the bill as abouesaid at which time he the said mr. Jordan did acknowledge that he had promised to pay sayd seventeen pounds and twelve shillings vnto this deponents ffather but wt hall sayd that my ffather did not send for it and also that mr. Spencer had given him a Counter Order, so that he would not pay the debt vnlesse the lawe Compelled him: and I doe further Testify that this was the principall ground of my Journey: in which I spent almost three weekes time and further saith not, taken vpon oath after the Interlyning the word Robert & Robert in the Margin this 14th September 1660 before me

Edward Rawson "Commissioner"⁹⁴

As Crowne was, by his own statement, "aged about twenty years" on September 14, 1660, we may now reaffirm with confidence the estimates of Grosse and MacMechan, and say that our author was born about 1640.

⁹³ Grosse, p. 10. Crowne's romance has been inaccessible to me.

⁹⁴ This deposition is reprinted by J. S. H. Fogg, *John Crowne—Poet and Dramatist. The Maine Historical and Genealogical Recorder*, IV, 189-190. The original document was probably in Dr. Fogg's own collection, which has been dispersed since his death. Inquiries have failed to reveal its present habitat.

Concerning the education of the youthful Crowne while he was in England, we may only infer. His father seems to have had more than ordinary opportunities for learning while he was connected with the household of the Earl of Arundel, if we may judge from his little journalistic volume concerning the expedition to Vienna. Moreover, he married into a well-to-do Shropshire family, and by his own energies seems to have placed himself in comfortable circumstances by means of the political offices which he held under the Parliamentary and Cromwellian governments.⁹⁵ We may presume, therefore, that his young son would receive what educational advantages he could procure for him. It is possible, indeed, that he may have attended Shrewsbury School, where his uncle Humphrey Mackworth received his early education. Certain it is that John Crowne must have had considerable training in construing the classics in order to enter Harvard College, as he did, in the autumn of 1657, since one of the rules for entrance to that institution then was ability "to understand Tully, or such like Classical Latine author ex tempore, and to make and speake true Latine in verse and prose . . . and to decline perfectly the paradigms of nounes and verbes in the Greek tongue."⁹⁶

When Col. William Crowne came to America in the summer of 1657 as joint proprietor of Nova Scotia with Thomas Temple, he brought his eldest son with him; but even in the unsettled condition of the new world he was thoughtful of the youth's education. As evidence of this there is an entry in an early Steward's Book of Harvard College, still extant, which runs as follows:

"Crowne is creditor

"2—7—57 payd to Thomas chesholme 002—02—00"⁹⁷

Thus on September 2, 1657, Col. Crowne paid 2 l. 2 s. for his son's tuition and the youth began his studies in the new world. Unfortunately the page opposite the above entry in the Steward's Book has been cut out, but in the Steward's account with the college Sibley found payments made by "Collonell Crowne", in the quarters ending 5—10—57 and 5—4—59, that is December 5, 1657 and June 5, 1659.⁹⁸ In addition to these financial records of young

⁹⁵ Evidence of his prosperity is found in his ability to buy an interest in Nova Scotia by paying 3379 l. owing to the widow of Major Gibbons. See *State Papers, Colonial*, 1661-68. p. 597.

⁹⁶ *New England's First Fruits, in respect to the progress of Learning in the Colledge at Cambridge in Massachusetts-bay* . . . London, 1643, p. 13.

⁹⁷ *The Steward's Book of Thomas Chesholme*, p. 323. This manuscript is in the archives of the Harvard College Library.

⁹⁸ J. L. Sibley, *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Harvard University*, I, 377.

Crowne's attendance at Harvard there is preserved a curious statement to that effect by our author himself in an undated deposition:

"John Crown, gentleman, maketh oath, that while he was at Boston, in New-England, soon after his Majesty's happy Restoration, Goffe and Whaley, two of the execrable murderers of his Majesty's royal father, of blessed memory, landed there; That after the said Goffe and Whaley resided some time at Boston, visiting and being visited by the principal persons of the town, and that among others they visited Mr. John Norton, the teacher of the principal independent church of the said town, That the deponent then boarded in the house of Mr. Norton, and was present when they visited him, and that he received them with great demonstrations of tenderness; that after this the said Goffe and Whaley went and resided in Cambridge (the university of New-England, of which the deponent was a member,) and that, having acquaintance with many of that university, he inquired of them how the said Goffe and Whaley were received"99

In view of Crowne's own testimony and that of the college records, it is probable that he was in continuous attendance at Harvard College from 1657 until the end of 1660. His three weeks' trip to Penobscot, of which he bears witness in the deposition of 1660, was made in the summer of 1658, when presumably the college was not in session.

When the future playwright was a student at Harvard, "the College was," in the words of Josiah Quincy, "conducted as a theological institution, in strict coincidence with the nature of the political constitution of the colony; having religion for its basis and chief object."¹⁰⁰ The curriculum was made up of such studies as physics (i. e. natural philosophy), arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy among the sciences; ethics, politics, and logic among the philosophical studies; and among the languages Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, and Syriac. In addition a part of each week was given up to rhetoric, prosody, declamations, commonplaces, and disputa-

⁹⁹ George Chalmers, *Political Annals of the Present United Colonies*, Bk. I, pp. 263-264.

¹⁰⁰ *New England's First Fruits*, pp. 14-16. Adrien Jacquinet, *L'Université Harvard, Revue Internationale de l'Enseignement*, I (1881), 54, gives a table summarizing the curriculum of the period from 1636-1692, and showing, in hours a week, the distribution of work among the different subjects of instruction during the three years.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|---------|
| Greek | 6 hours | Rhetoric | 3 hours |
| Hebrew | 1 | Declamations | 3 |
| Chaldee | 1 | Commonplaces | 3 |
| Syriac | 1 | Bible | 1 |
| History or Botany | 1 | Books of Ezra and Daniel | 1 |
| Arithmetic or Geometry | 2 | New Testament | 1 |
| Logic and Physics | 2 | Theological Catechism | 1 |
| Ethics | 2 | Disputations | 7 |

tions. The study of the Bible and the catechism was a natural part of the work, while history was assigned to the winter months, and the study of plants to the summer. The rules of conduct were very rigid, and each student had to report to his tutor at the seventh hour in the morning for prayers, and at the fifth hour at night to account for his private reading during the day.¹⁰¹ In view of such a system of education one does not wonder at the remark of Dennis concerning Crowne: "The Vivacity of his Genius made him soon grow impatient of that sullen and gloomy education, and soon oblig'd him to get loose from it and seek his Fortune in England." Whatever may be said of the puritanical instruction of America's first college as a training for the future playwright, it is likely that there he first became acquainted with the works of the Greek and Latin historians such as Suetonius, Curtius, Dio Cassius, and others, who furnished him later with much material for his tragedies. In this respect, at least, the thorough training which he received in the classical languages stood him in good stead.¹⁰² Of his life during these three years we know nothing other than what is contained in his deposition concerning the reception to Goffe and Whaley. In 1660 he was boarding at the home of Rev. John Norton, the minister of the principal church in Boston.¹⁰³ The summer vacations he doubtless spent in part in journeys to his father's estate along the Penobscot. We know of at least one such adventure in the summer of 1658, which Crowne himself records.¹⁰⁴

There is no sure evidence as to the date of the youthful Crowne's return to England, but it is highly probable that he accompanied his father when the latter sailed for London at the close of December, 1660. Probably, as Dennis suggests, he was eager to get away from the restricting influences of puritanical New England to the freer life of his native country, and it is scarcely likely that Col. Crowne would leave his son behind in the new world in view of the uncertainty which he must have felt about his estate. The further fact that John Crowne did not take a degree at Harvard College leads to the same inference. Had he remained in New

¹⁰¹ See above, p. 26, n. 100.

¹⁰² Grosse, pp. 11-12, remarks concerning Harvard College in 1657-60 and Crowne's education there: "Der Ruf, den diese Universität zu jener Zeit genoss, berichtet uns zu dem Schlusse, dass Crowne dort eine gründliche Bildung genossen hat. Gar oft giebt er in seinem Werken überraschende Beweise von einer guten Belesenheit der Alten; auch die moderne Literatur mag ihm schon hier erschlossen worden sein." Grosse is under a misconception as to the nature of Harvard College in 1657. Nothing is more certain than the fact that modern literature was *not* disclosed to him there.

¹⁰³ Chalmers, *op. cit.*, p. 263.

¹⁰⁴ Fogg, *op. cit.*, IV, 189-190.

England until August, 1661,¹⁰⁶ there is reason to believe that he would have been prepared to take the first degree. It is difficult to see that Crowne's three years in America had any permanent effect upon him. His works show no recollections of this period of his life.¹⁰⁶ On the other hand, the toryism of his political views, in opposition to the political allegiance of his father, may have been his normal reaction against the theocratical ideas which prevailed in England and America during his youth. It is more than likely, furthermore, that his strong opposition to Catholicism may be traced to the Protestant theological training which he received at Harvard College.

The next ten years of Crowne's life after his return to England are much more obscure than the period which we have just been considering. When Col. Crowne returned to America (probably in the late spring of 1662), he left his son behind in London; and thereafter the lad was forced to struggle for a living on his own account. His father had sunk the earnings of his best years in the Nova Scotian adventure, and when he failed to receive fair treatment from Temple, he was in no position to be of financial assistance to his son. Dennis gives us our only clew to the young man's life during these years, and in view of the inaccuracy of his earlier statements, we can only repeat his account for what it is worth. He says of Crowne, "Necessity, upon his first Arrival here, oblig'd him to become a Gentleman-Usher to an old Independent Lady. But he soon grew as weary of that precise Office as he had been of the Discipline of Nova Scotia."¹⁰⁷ As a result he turned to literary activities and wrote a prose romance, entitled *Pandion and Amphigeneia, or the Coy Lady of Thessalia*. In the dedication he calls it the offspring of his vacant hours, and says he "fancyed it" when he was scarcely twenty. We have already disposed of Grosse's attempt to date Crowne's birth from this latter statement.¹⁰⁸ It is

¹⁰⁶ Albert Matthews, *Harvard Commencement Days 1642-1916. Publications of The Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, XVIII, 379, conjectures that Aug. 13th was the commencement date in 1661.

¹⁰⁶ Grosse, pp. 9-10, is of the opinion that in later life Crowne looked back with longing to the scenes of his "boyhood," and that when in 1697 he made a further effort to recover his estate in America he did it "dass der Besitz seines Erbtheiles es ihm möglich machen würde, dort ohne materielle Sorgen dichtend und träumend inmitten einer herrlichen Natur zu leben." Thereupon he quotes Crowne's statement, "The loss of it has made England a desert to me." As a matter of fact Crowne had no idea of spending his last years in America "poetizing without material worries and dreaming in the midst of a beautiful nature." "My inheritance," he says to the contrary, "tho' it lay in the *deserts of America* would have enabled me, if I could have kept it, to have liv'd at my ease in *these beautiful parts o' the world*; the loss of it has made England a desert to me." (*Works*, IV, 348. The italics are mine.)

¹⁰⁷ Dennis, I, 49.

¹⁰⁸ See above, pp. 23-24.

possible, indeed, that Crowne's romance was written in 1661, the first year after his return from New England, but, as we have seen, it is likely that the youthful author had some considerable difficulty in finding a publisher who was willing to print the first-born of his fancy. At any rate it was not published until January 1665.¹⁰⁹

Sir Walter Raleigh, one of the historians of the English novel and romance, comments as follows on *Pandion and Amphigeneia*:"

"It is no better, in some respects it is worse, than the work of the idlest titled amateurs. The first hundred pages neither begin the main story nor prepare the way for it; they offer sundry minor stories to the reader while he is waiting. . . . When the story begins it is carried on in a halting intermittent fashion, and it never finishes . . . This paralysis of the story is so common a disease of the heroic romance as almost to serve for definition."¹¹⁰

Crowne's work was inspired seemingly by the great vogue which the heroic romance was then enjoying in England. Even before the appearance of *Pandion and Amphigeneia*, the long, lumbering romances of Madeleine de Scudéry and La Calprenède had been translated into English and were being read with avidity by the courtiers after their return from exile. Already the exaggerated heroes and heroines and the exotic settings were being used by the playwrights and were being developed into the new type of heroic drama. Other influences besides those of the current vogue of the French heroic romances, however, are to be noticed in the young author's work. Raleigh continues,

"In a preface to the reader he is careful to condemn all the faults of romance-writing which he subsequently exemplifies in his tale. A writer should not 'bolster up a crooked invention with fungous words,' nor make a fiction 'an hospital of lame conceits' . . . The book is interesting as another illustration of the powerful and abiding influence of Sidney on the English romance. . . . In the coarse and clumsy comedy of Anus and Daphnis, introduced as an episode in *Pandion*, Crowne follows the hapless example of the weakest part of the *Arcadia*. Ever and again he appropriates shamelessly in his description without improvement. . . . Even Pamela's prayer finds its counterpart in the prayer of Glycera. . . . Sidney is not the only author that Crowne draws from. In the poem that occurs incidentally in *Pandion and*

¹⁰⁹ Arber, *Stationers' Register*, 1640-1708, II, 351.

¹¹⁰ Walter Raleigh, *The English Novel*, p. 99. Crowne's *Pandion* has been inaccessible to me; I have been forced, therefore, to depend upon the criticism of others concerning it.

Amphigeneia the following stanza will show how the heroic school could improve on George Herbert:—

'Sweet day, so calm, so cool, so bright,
Thou hast expelled the dusky night,
And Sol begins to mount on high,
And marry Tellus to the sky.' "¹¹¹

Professor Saintsbury agrees with Raleigh about the borrowing from the *Arcadia*, and adds his own comment: "The fact is that this romance was foredoomed to inefficiency. It was not a genuine *kind* at all: but a sort of patchwork of imitations of imitations—a mule which, unlike the natural animal, was itself bred, and bred in and in, of mules for generations back. It was true to no time, to no country, to no system of manners, life, or thought."¹¹² M. Jusserand is in practical agreement. He says the main defects of heroical literature, "bombast in the ideas and bad taste in the expressions," are pushed to an extreme in Crowne's romance.¹¹³

In the period immediately following the Restoration the most promising field of literary activity for an aspiring young writer was the drama. The type was then in a stage of transition and offered possibilities afforded in no other branch of literature. Practically all the younger generation of writers such as Dryden, Etherege, Wycherley, Sir Robert Howard, Sedley, and Orrery, were experimenting with plays. It was natural, therefore, that Crowne should also try his hand at playwriting. At just what time he began his experiments we cannot tell, but we may probably date his earliest efforts late in the first decade after the Restoration. In the dedication to his first play, *Juliana*, Crowne declares that it is "the first-born of its kind" which he "ever laboured with to perfection." This implies one or more earlier attempts which remained unfinished. It is apparent, moreover, that *Juliana* was written some time before its production in the summer of 1671, since Crowne says that it was "pen'd in a crowd, and hurry of business and travel; interrupted and disorder'd by many unfortunate, not to say insolent affairs, of a quite different nature."¹¹⁴ There is no indication of the nature of his business during this period, but the remark is suggestive. We may suppose, perhaps, that his

¹¹¹ Raleigh, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-101.

¹¹² Geo. Saintsbury, *The English Novel*, p. 47.

¹¹³ J. J. Jusserand, *The English Novel in the Time of Shakespeare*, p. 389. A wood-cut or "sculpture" from *Pandion* is reprinted by Jusserand, p. 347.

¹¹⁴ *Works*, I, 15.

travels led him to Paris and gave him his first real knowledge of the French language and literature. At this time he may well have witnessed the performance of several of Molière's comedies and stored up his experience for future use.

III. THE BEGINNING DRAMATIST 1670-1677.

With the beginning of the 1670 period Crowne associated himself actively with the theatrical world. It will be recalled that his father's estate in America had been given to the French by the treaty of Breda in 1667 and relinquished by Temple to them in 1670. As Crowne could no longer hope for financial assistance from his father, he cast in his lot with the Duke's Theatre and became a playwright. His earliest play, *Juliana, or the Princess of Poland*, shared the fate of many first productions at this time. It was brought out by the Duke's Servants—Betterton and his associates—in 1671, while they were still playing in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. Crowne himself ascribes its poor reception to the time of year—the long vacation, when the courtly theatre-goers were mostly absent from London, and this circumstance doubtless had its effect; but the piece certainly deserved to fail because of its confused plot, if for no other reason. *Juliana* is a romantic comedy. The scene is laid in Poland apparently with a view to capitalizing the public interest which Englishmen then felt in that country.

During the delays which doubtless occurred between the composition of *Juliana* and its acceptance by Betterton for the Duke's Company, Crowne must have written his second play. *The History of Charles the Eighth of France* was more fortunate than its predecessor in the circumstances of its production. The Duke's Company removed from Lincoln's-Inn-Fields to its new theatre in Dorset Garden in November 1671, and according to the prompter Downes, *Charles the Eighth* was the first new play to be given there. "It was all new Cloath'd" and ran for six successive days, with occasional performances later.¹¹⁵ It was the new playwright's first effort in the heroic drama, the vogue of which had reached its height a year or two earlier in Dryden's *Conquest of Granada* (1669-70).

For the two years following the production of *Charles the Eighth* there is no record of further dramatic composition on the part of Crowne. Early in 1674, however, he was at work on a prose translation of Racine's *Andromaque*. An anonymous young

¹¹⁵ *Roscinus Anglicanus*, pp. 31-32.

gentleman had previously rendered this in poor heroic couplets with the hope of seeing it brought upon the English stage, but the play was not acceptable and to Crowne was assigned the task of making it stageworthy. He turned the greater part of it into prose and it was played in the summer of 1674, but with ill success. Piqued by its failure, Crowne hastened to explain his part in it, in the preface prefixed to the printed quarto.

About this time Crowne became implicated, together with Dryden and Shadwell, in a literary quarrel with Elkanah Settle. Settle's heroic tragedy, *The Empress of Morocco*, had been acted twice before the king in the private theatre at Whitehall in 1669 or 1670, and in 1671 it was presented publicly at the new Duke's Theatre in Dorset Garden.¹¹⁶ where, according to Dennis, it was played "for a month together."¹¹⁷ Its great success led the publishers, when they printed it in 1673, to adorn it with "sculptures" and to fix its price at two shillings, which was double the usual charge for play-books. In the dedication, moreover, Settle took occasion to refer satirically to Dryden and the ill success of his latest play, *The Assignment* (1672). Dryden was already jealous of the unmerited popularity of his younger rival, and he was not slow in retorting. In his reply he received the assistance of Shadwell and Crowne, who had no particular occasion for a quarrel with Settle, except his popularity. The result was an anonymous quarto pamphlet, entitled *Notes and Observations on the Empress of Morocco, Or some few Errata's to be Printed instead of the Sculptures with the Second Edition of that Play*, published in 1674. This somewhat lengthy attack consisted of a preface, "Erratas in the Epistle," notes upon the plot and management of the play, and a postscript. It was made up mainly of abuse and quibbles. Settle at once prepared a reply which he called *Notes and Observations on The Empress of Morocco Revised; With Some few Errata's to be Printed instead of the "Postscript", with the next Edition of the Conquest of Granada*. He unhesitatingly ascribed the book to its three actual authors. "With very little conjuration," he remarks in his preface, "by those three remarkable Qualities of Railing, Boasting and Thieving I found a Dryden in the Frontispiece. Then going through the Preface, I observ'd the drawing of a Fools Picture to be the design of the

¹¹⁶ F. C. Brown, *Elkanah Settle*, pp. 11, 13.

¹¹⁷ John Dennis, *Remarks upon Mr. Pope's Translation of Homer*, Preface. Quoted by Brown, p. 14.

whole piece, and reflecting on the Painter I consider'd that probably his Pamphlet might be like his Plays, not to be written without help. And according to expectation I discovered the Author of Epsome-Wells, and the Author of Pandion and Amphigenia lent their assistance. How! Three to One thought I? and three Gentlemen of such disagreeing Qualifications in one Club: The First a Man that has had wit, but is past it; the Second that has it, if he can keep it, and the Third that neither has, nor is ever like to have it." Settle rightly designates Dryden as the promoter of the pamphlet, and thinks that Crowne may have engaged in it "out of a Vain Glory of being in Print, knowing himself to be so little a Reptile in Poetry, that hee's beholding to a Lampoon for giving the World to know, that there is such a writer in being."¹¹⁸ Some of Settle's friends advised him to reply to all three, but he says of Crowne that "he cannot be well attacked; his Plays being fortified against Objections. For like the Leper that from Head to Foot was all Deformity, I defie any man to meet with above one fault in a whole Play of his."¹¹⁸

The trio of attacking playwrights had underestimated Settle's popularity, and they came off but lamely from the encounter. The reflections which their pamphlet cast upon those who had praised *The Empress of Morocco* probably had much to do with causing Rochester and Buckingham to support Settle in the controversy, since Rochester had favored its presentation at Whitehall.¹¹⁹ The exact shares which each of the three collaborators had in *Notes and Observations* can probably never be settled. Dryden is generally given credit for the preface and postscript, while Settle assigns the notes on the fourth act to Shadwell.¹²⁰ Many years later, in 1698, when the quarrel was only a memory, Crowne wrote in the prefatory epistle to *Caligula*, "In my notes on a play call'd the Empress of Morocco, I call 'em mine because above three parts of four were written by me, I gave vent to more ill-nature in me than I will do again."¹²¹ It may be that this remark, like Wycherley's statement to Pope concerning the dates at which his comedies were written, is only a reminiscent half-

¹¹⁸ [Settle], *Notes and Observations on The Empress of Morocco Revised*. Preface. Quoted by Brown, pp. 57-58.

¹¹⁹ Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-57.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 55, note 1.

¹²¹ *Works*, IV, 353.

truth, but Crowne would scarcely have penned it if he had not had a considerable share in the abusive pamphlet.¹²²

The popularity of Settle and the prominence which he had gained among the young artists of the town as a result of his successful encounter with the poet laureate soon caused the fickle Rochester to withdraw his favor and to bestow it upon the man whom Settle had abused in turn as "so little a 'Reptile in Poetry'"; that is, upon Crowne. In the summer of 1674 Princess Mary, the elder daughter of the Duke of York, desired a masque for a court performance, and Rochester procured Crowne to write the piece. In this move he had the double motive, as we shall see later, of curbing the vainglorious Settle, and of mortifying Dryden, against whom he had a grudge because the latter was under the patronage of the Earl of Mulgrave.¹²³ The result was Crowne's masque *Calisto; or the Chaste Nymph*, elaborately performed by the two princesses and other young noblewomen at court in December and January, 1674 and 1675. The production of *Calisto* was a noteworthy event in the life of the struggling dramatist. The masque is in no wise remarkable as a dramatic poem, but it brought Crowne into the place of prominence in literary circles which Settle had held but recently. It also marks the beginning of Crowne's relations as a playwright with Charles II; by means of it he experienced for the first time "the princely bounty" of the Merry Monarch.¹²⁴

In the following year, 1675, Crowne wrote his first comedy, *The Countrey Wit*. It was composed in prose in conformity with the practice which Etherege, Wycherley, Shadwell and others had established for the new comedy of manners. It also follows the contemporary fashion in drawing heavily on Molière. The production of *The Countrey Wit* at the Duke's Theatre was marked by greater success than Crowne had hitherto achieved at the public playhouse. The play was to the liking of Charles II, and Crowne was again honored with his favor.¹²⁵

In spite of the success of his first comedy, Crowne returned to the serious drama in his next play. During the year 1676 he was engaged in writing a two-part heroic drama, entitled *The Destruction of Jerusalem*. The two plays were acted by the King's

¹²² Brown, p. 55, note 1, is of the opinion that "in spite of the many stupid things throughout the pamphlet, one is forced to conclude that Dryden had much to do with the entire piece."

¹²³ See below, Chapter II, p. 78.

¹²⁴ *Works*, I, 239.

¹²⁵ *Works*, III, 17.

Company at the Theatre Royal in the spring of 1677, and met with as extraordinary applause as had greeted Dryden's *Conquest of Granada* in 1669-70 and Settle's *Empress of Morocco* in 1671. Heretofore Crowne's plays had been written for the Duke's Theatre; but Betterton's company refused his new play—doubtless because they had already accepted Otway's *Titus and Berenice*,¹²⁶ and Crowne had to apply at the other theatre. Its success piqued the Duke's men, who regarded Crowne as their own property, and the two companies clashed over this and other matters. As a result Killigrew, Hart, Burt, Goodman, and Mohun of the Theatre Royal complained to the Lord Chamberlain that they were unfairly treated. Fortunately this complaint has been preserved and throws considerable light upon the conditions under which Crowne was writing during this period. The early part of the document recites a complaint against Dryden and Lee for giving their tragedy *Oedipus* to the Duke's Theatre when they were under contract with the King's Company. It then continues:

"Mr. Crowne being under a like agreement with the Duke's House, writt a play called The Destruction of Jerusalem, and being forced by their refusall of it to bring it to us, the said Company compelled us after the studying of it, and a vast expence in scenes and cloathes to buy off their clayme, by paying all the pension he had received from them; amounting to one hundred and twelve pounds paid by the King's Company, besides neere forty pounds he the said Mr. Crowne paid out of his owne pocket."¹²⁷

From this document it is evident that the services of Crowne were secured to the Duke's Company by a sort of retaining fee or pension, which in his case seems to have amounted to 112 *l.* a year. How long before 1677 this arrangement had been in effect we cannot say, but it doubtless dated back to the beginning of 1675 when the playwright became prominent on account of his introduction to the Court by Rochester. Indeed it is possible, though hardly likely, that the arrangement may have been effected as early as 1672, when *Charles the Eighth* was played with success, since the Duke's Company produced all of Crowne's plays in the next few years. The sum of 112 *l.*, however, does not represent, as Grosse thinks, the poet's total annual income.¹²⁸ In those years in which the plays were being acted, he received also the receipts of the third day's

¹²⁶ See below, Chapter II, p. 93.

¹²⁷ *The . . . Prose Works of John Dryden*, ed. Malone, I, Pt. I, 73-75.

¹²⁸ Grosse, p. 14.

performance, which according to Malone amounted generally to about 70 *l.* In addition the author received about 20 or 25 *l.* for his play from the publisher, and another 5 *l.* from the nobleman whom he flattered in the dedication.¹²⁹ Thus in the productive years of this early period Crowne must have had an income of 200 *l.*

In spite of his pension and third-day benefit, however, the position of the Restoration playwright was subject to a considerable extent to the fickle favor of the young and oftentimes very clever noblemen who were themselves dabblers in poetry and drama, and who favored or opposed their more dependent fellow craftsmen as their capricious natures directed. John Wilmot, the profligate Earl of Rochester, was especially fickle as a patron. As early as 1672 Crowne had dedicated his *Charles the Eighth* to him, and two years later, as we have seen, Rochester introduced him at court and secured for him the commission of masque-writer, mainly for the purpose of debasing Settle and galling Dryden. In the years immediately following Crowne had achieved notable successes in *The Countrey Wit* and especially in *The Destruction of Jerusalem*. Thereupon Rochester became jealous of his newest poet-puppet, and transferred his favor to Otway. Such at least is the testimony of a letter prefixed to an edition of Rochester's works, and supposed to have been written by St. Evremond to the Duchess of Mazarin. The part referring to Rochester and Crowne reads:

"But when Mr. Crowne's 'Destruction of Jerusalem' had met with as wild and unaccountable success as Mr. Dryden's 'Conquest of Granada', his Lordship withdrew his favour as if he would be still in contradiction to the town."¹³⁰

At all events Rochester satirized Crowne in the following year, 1678, in *An Allusion to the Tenth Satyr of the First Book of Horace*. After saying of Dryden that

"The heavy Mass

That stuffs up his loose Volumes must not pass;"

he adds

"For by that Rule I might aswel admit

Crown's tedious Sense for Poetry and Wit."¹³¹

¹²⁹ Malone-Boswell, *Variorum Shakespeare, Historical Account of the English Stage*, III, 162-164 note 8. On pp. 173-174, note 1, Malone quotes Gildon in his *Laws of Poetry* (1721) as observing that "after the Restoration, when the two houses struggled for the favour of the town, the taking poets were secured to either house by a sort of retaining fee which seldom or never amounted to more than forty shillings a week, nor was that of any long continuance." Malone thinks, however, that Gildon underrated their profits.

¹³⁰ Preface to *The Works of the Earl of Rochester, Roscommon, and Dorset*, London, 1731, quoted by Maidment and Logan, *Works*, II, 218. The original volume is not accessible to me.

¹³¹ J. E. Spingarn, *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, II, 282.

In another satire entitled *Session of the Poets* and generally ascribed to Rochester, although it appears in the works of the Duke of Buckingham as written by him, under the title, "*A Trial of the Poets for the Bays, in Imitation of a Satyr in Boileau*", something of Crowne's personal appearance and dress at this period are revealed:

"In the numerous Crowd that incompast him round
 Little Starch'd Johnny C— at his elbow he found,
 His Crevat-string new Iron'd, he gently did stretch
 His lilly white Hand out, the Lawrel to reach,
 Alledging that he had most right to the Bays,
 For writing Romances, and sh—ting of Plays:
 Apollo rose up, and gravely confest,
 Of all Men that writ, his Talent was best;
 For since Pain and Dishonour Mans Life only dam,
 The greatest Felicity Mankind can claim,
 Is to want Sense of Smart, and to be past Sense of Shame;
 And to perfect his Bliss in Poetical Rapture,
 He bid him be dull to the end of the Chapter."¹²²

From these passages we can gather that John Crowne was a man of small stature, and unusually particular about his personal appearance. There is other satirical testimony, however, that the playwright's life was not one of great felicity. Buckingham in *A Consolatory Epistle to Captain Julian, the Muses News-Monger, in his Confinement* comforts the imprisoned scribbler by referring to the wretched state of Dryden, gentle George (Etherege), Otway, D'Urfey, Shadwell, Settle, and Lee, as well as to that of Crowne:

"Poor Crown too has his Third Daies mix'd with Gall,
 He lives so ill, he hardly lives at all."¹²³

The misery and want which pursued Otway and Lee must also have been the fate of Crowne at times in the years before he knew the favor of Charles II.

IV. THE TORY PLAYWRIGHT; EFFORTS TO SECURE AN ESTATE IN AMERICA.

The favor which Crowne had come to enjoy from King Charles as a result of *Calisto* and *The Countrey Wit* was no doubt pleasing to his father on the other side of the Atlantic. Hope of securing

¹²² *The Miscellaneous Works of the Duke of Buckingham*, 1707, I, 41.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 20-23.

compensation for the loss of his estate in the Penobscot region so that he might leave behind a better provision for his children, led the elder Crowne to suggest to his literary son that he capitalize his favor with the Merry Monarch and petition for the proprietorship of Mounthope, near the Plymouth settlements. Col. Crowne's residence at Prudence Island during King Philip's War was perhaps responsible for the selection of Mounthope. Accordingly, in January, 1679, the younger Crowne petitioned the King and Privy Council in behalf of his father for the desolate and uninhabited Mounthope in compensation for the loss of the Nova Scotian property.¹³⁴ The matter was referred to the committee of Trade and Plantations, and an investigation was set on foot to determine the extent of the land and the title. Letters of inquiry were sent to the several New England colonies,¹³⁵ and on July 1st the governor and council of New Plymouth replied that the land was about seven thousand acres in extent and had been conquered in the late Indian war from Sachem Philip. Moreover, it was unquestionably within the limits of the New Plymouth patent. They therefore begged the king not to deprive them of it.¹³⁶ Upon receipt of this letter the Lords of Trade and Plantations recommended that New Plymouth be allowed to continue in possession of the lands and agreed that no part of them should be given to Crowne, "whatever his pretensions to the King's favour on some other occasion."¹³⁷

Despairing of obtaining Mounthope, the playwright presented another petition in February 1680, asking for "a tract of land called Boston Neck¹³⁸ or such a number of acres of the Narragansett Country (which is His Majesty's right by ancient donation of the Indians) as may afford his father, family, and himself a competent subsistence."¹³⁹ In March the Lords of Trade and Plantation took up the petition, but nothing came of it.¹⁴⁰

During the same spring in which Crowne petitioned for Mounthope his next play, *The Ambitious Statesman*, was produced. This was his most pretentious effort thus far, but it was not successful

¹³⁴ *State Papers, Colonial*, 1677-80, p. 319.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 328.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 384-385.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 435-436.

¹³⁸ Boston Neck is the rich strip of shore between the Pettaquamscutt river and the western entrance to Providence Bay, and north of the inlet. It was then a part of the Narragansett country. Cf. Edgar M. Bacon, *Narragansett Bay Its Historic and Romantic Association and Picturesque Setting*, p. 248.

¹³⁹ *State Papers, Colonial*, 1677-80, p. 477.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 492.

on the stage. Its failure was due in part no doubt to the unsettled conditions in England. Only a short while before, the so-called Popish Plot agitation had begun, and during the spring of 1679, when Crowne's new tragedy was produced, London was in the midst of the murder trials which grew out of the accusations of Titus Oates. It is not to be wondered at, then, if the villainous character of the Constable in Crowne's play failed to attract a public which really believed that there was a monstrous plot afoot to murder Protestants and reestablish Catholicism in England.

As a direct effect of the Popish Plot there was a sharp cleavage in the political views of Englishmen which resulted in the formation of the two political parties, Tories and Whigs. The Whigs rallied round the Earl of Shaftesbury and tried to make capital of the perjuries of Oates in order to embarrass Stuart despotism and more especially to secure the exclusion of the Catholic Duke of York from the succession. The Tories were not less ardent supporters of Protestantism as represented by the Established Church, but they would not consent to limit the king's prerogative. The conflict was very bitter, and almost threatened civil war. Therefore, Crowne, who was now securely in the favor of King Charles, and who looked back with shudderings to the strife of the commonwealth period, took occasion to warn his fellow-countrymen of the dire effects of civil discord by adapting parts of the Shakespearean trilogy of *Henry VI* in a play which he called *The Miseries of Civil-War*. It was produced at the Duke's Theatre in 1680. Not only was the play political in purpose; it was also in part a satire upon Catholicism. In his previous tragedy, *The Ambitious Statesman*, Crowne had begun his opposition to the Catholics—an opposition which was to continue uppermost in his mind for the next ten years. In 1681 he adapted another play from an earlier part of the Shakespearean *Henry VI*. On this occasion his main purpose was to satirize the Catholics, or as he himself put it, to add "a little vinegar against the Pope." Neither of these adaptations, however, served to increase Crowne's reputation as a playwright. His next play, *Thyestes*, brought out in 1681, showed still his dependence upon older drama for his substance, but it is a far worthier endeavor than his rehashing of *Henry VI*. In his conduct of the plot, at least, he improved upon the grim and revolting tragedy of Seneca.

The years from 1680 to 1683 saw many playwrights engaged

in the conflict between the two parties, and expending their efforts in veiled or openly abusive satirical plays against their opponents. At this time Crowne was an ardent Tory, and thus in 1682 he was occupied in writing perhaps the most completely political play of the group. *City Politiques*, a prose comedy, was acted at the Theatre Royal probably at the beginning of 1683, but not until it had been long held up in the office of the Lord Chamberlain, Henry Bennet, who, according to Dennis, was secretly a Whig, and therefore hindered every effort at stage satire against his party. Dennis is authority also for the statement that Crowne at length grew impatient of the delay, and relying upon his favor with Charles II, secured a royal mandate to have the play acted.¹⁴¹ Most of the major characters are thinly veiled caricatures of leading Whigs, and although Crowne denied the charge of impersonation, his defence, as we shall see later, does not bear close scrutiny. Incidentally Crowne paid the interest on an old score by satirizing Elkanah Settle among other Whig poets in the person of Craffy.¹⁴²

City Politiques is undeniably a salacious play, but it is a clever political satire as well, and must have been pleasing to the Tories and to the king himself. Therefore in 1684, when Shaftesbury was dead and his opponents were enjoying their power, Crowne chose a favorable moment to plead with the king for a reward for his services. He had ample testimony of the enmity which the Whigs bore him for his satire against their leaders. He was weary, moreover, of the uncertainty which confronted even his best efforts as a playwright. Unlike Shakespeare and the elder race of titanic dramatists, Crowne did not write plays because he loved the theatre, but because that was the literary field which offered the best opportunities for a livelihood during the Restoration period. He saw before him the examples of Etherege and Wycherley, talented playwrights, who had forsaken the theatre at the crest of their popularity and lived admired in the midst of the sparkling society of the court. Although Crowne had a deep dislike for the commotion and bustle of the court,¹⁴³ he was determined to secure his elder years against the wretchedness which might otherwise be his fortune. With this in mind, and conscious also that the government owed him something for the loss of his father's estate, he asked King Charles

¹⁴¹ Dennis, I, 49-50.

¹⁴² See below, Chapter II, p. 131.

¹⁴³ Dennis, I, 50.

for an office which would give him a comfortable income. According to Dennis the king was willing to grant the request, but being a great lover of merry comedies, as Crowne himself testifies,¹⁴⁴ he insisted that the playwright should write him another play. Crowne attempted to excuse himself on the ground that he was a very slow plotter, but the king supplied him with Moreto's *No Puede Ser* and there was nothing to do but to comply. Oldmixon is authority for the statement that the composition of the piece proceeded under the supervision of the king,¹⁴⁵ who bade Crowne continue even when an earlier adaptation of the Spanish play was discovered. At length *Sir Courtly Nice* was completed and placed in rehearsal. Good success seemed to await it, and the author looked forward to the fulfilment of the king's promise. But Crowne was born under an unlucky star. On the very day of the last rehearsal the profligate king was seized with a fit and three days later he died. With his death perished Crowne's favor at court and the possibility of his advancement to a position of independent means. His disappointment must have been very keen, and even the remarkable success of *Sir Courtly Nice* must have given him cold comfort. Charles II died on February 6, 1685, and not long afterwards, apparently, the poet mourned his great loss in a little poem *On the Lamented Death of our Late Gracious Sovereign, King Charles the II. of ever Blessed Memory*. The couplets are in the customary laudatory vein, and are of no particular merit. One feels that the sentiments are sincere, however, in such lines as these:—

"Thro' my cold dark frame, a voice does spread
To my numb'd Ear, and says in Charles I'm dead."

With the accession of James II the comedy on which Crowne had expended his best effort to please the Merry Monarch—now jesting no more—was the first of the new plays to be acted. Its great success and continued popularity for nearly a hundred years mark it as Crowne's main contribution to the drama of his age. If Charles had lived and fulfilled his promise, *Sir Courtly Nice* might have brought his connection with the theatre to a successful close, just as *Sir Fopling Flutter* was the last work of Etherege; but fate ruled otherwise, and with 1685 the short period of Crowne's best achievement draws to an end.

¹⁴⁴ *Works*, III, 254. Dedication to *Sir Courtly Nice*.

¹⁴⁵ John Oldmixon, *The History of England during the Reigns of the Royal House of Stuart*, p. 690.

V. PLAYWRITING AGAIN FOR A LIVELIHOOD.

In the years immediately following the death of his royal patron, Crowne produced nothing. He tells us that during this time he was the victim of a tedious sickness.¹⁴⁶ It was not until 1688 that he came forward with a new play,—a tragedy. He was aware, he says, that the taste of the time favored comedy, but his physical condition and his gloomy spirits put him in no humor for the lighter form of drama.¹⁴⁶ *Darius* was brought out in the spring of 1688, but ill-luck still dogged Crowne's footsteps. At the first performance Mrs. Barry became ill while acting the part of the heroine, and the piece fell dead. The author's only consolation was in the extraordinarily large receipts of the third day by reason of the presence of King James.¹⁴⁷

Not many months after the representation of *Darius*, the national resentment against the efforts of James to catholicize England burst forth, and with the arrival of William of Orange the last Stuart king was forced to flee the realm. With his departure the animosity which Crowne cherished for Catholicism and which he had of late been forced to suppress, blazed forth more ardently than ever, and in 1689 he wrote a new comedy severely satirical of the Catholic practices of the late reign. *The English Frier* was played probably in the autumn of 1689, but Crowne's enemies among the Whigs whom he had satirized in *City Politiques* and the Catholics whom he now satirized caused such an uproar that the play was withdrawn to keep peace in the theatre.

The English Frier was Crowne's severest arraignment of the Catholic religion and its priests, but its suppression by the actors did not cause him to remain silent long on the subject of his animosity. His next effort, however, was not in the field of the drama. In January, 1692, he published an heroic poem in four cantos, entitled *Daeneids, or the Noble Labours of the Great Dean of Notre-Dame in Paris*. The work is in part a translation of Boileau's *Lutrin*, but Crowne made no effort to reproduce the French poem in its entirety.¹⁴⁸ In his dedication to the Earl of Mulgrave he explains his attitude towards his original: "I am well assured the *Lutrin* pleases Your Lordship, but I may doubt of my management of it;

¹⁴⁶ *Works*, III, 370.

¹⁴⁷ See below, Chapter II, p. 146.

¹⁴⁸ For Grosse's discussion of the *Daeneids*, see his monograph, pp. 94-102.

for I treat it as an English Privateer would do a French Prize, great part of it, I fling away, and I dash-brew and disguise the rest as I think good." A comparison of *Le Lutrin* and the *Daeneids* leads one to the conclusion that the poet's doubts concerning the handling of the French poem were well founded. Boileau's work is a true mock-heroic poem with much of the supernatural machinery used by the old narrative poets. Epic mannerisms are cleverly burlesqued, and the touch of the skilled artist is manifest throughout. Crowne's poem, on the contrary, has few mock-epic traits. The goddesses Discord and Night he uses only because they are absolutely necessary to the story. He reduces the elaborate mock-heroic introduction to a few lines. He fails to grasp the significance of the heroic descriptions of the contestants and he unpardonably omits the splendid battle of the books in Chant V.

Still, one must remember that Crowne's purpose was not to compose a mock-epic, but rather to satirize the religious enemies of his country. He ventured to adapt Boileau's poem, so he tells us in the dedication, "because it exposes to contempt Men, who are the Antipodes of good Sence; Priests who advance Nonsense above Reason, make Trifles of the most Solemn Matters, and Solemn Things of Trifles; are idle in the great Affairs of their Calling and busie in Impertinence."¹⁴⁹ To this end he seizes every opportunity to emphasize and enlarge upon the epicurean taste of the Romish clergy, their indolence and the hollowness of their ecclesiastical forms. A few other changes of less importance are to be noted. The names and to some extent the characters of the three champions selected by lot to place the choir-desk (*le Lutrin*) in such a position that it will conceal the proud Chanter, are changed. For the golden-locked barber, *Lamour*, whose wife pleads with him to forsake the guest, Crowne has substituted *Minnun*, a handsome young singing-man, whose amorous gallantry has been the ruin of many a maiden. The other two champions are renamed *Trole* and *Verger* in place of *Brontin* and *Boirude*. The name of the latter the English author substitutes for *Sidrac* in the part of the Dean's friendly adviser.

Grosse is of the opinion that Crowne heightens the comic effects of Boileau's mock-epic,¹⁵⁰ but I cannot agree with him. On the contrary it seems to me that the omission of the burlesquing descriptions

¹⁴⁹ The *Daeneids*, Dedication.

¹⁵⁰ Grosse, p. 102.

of the contestants and the battle of the books together with the neglect of the supernatural machinery employed by Boileau decreases the comic effect to a marked degree. Contemporary comment appraised the poem as dull. Edward Ward wrote in 1692:

"Tho' ten times duller every line appears,
Than Crowns late *Daeneids*, or John Bunyans Verse,
Yet his flat Nonsense will the World prefer
Before the Lines of Cowley, Rochester,
Waller or Denham."¹⁵¹

In the same year in which the *Daeneids* appeared, 1692, Crowne came forward with another comic poem, *The History of the Famous and Passionate Love between a Fair Noble Parisian Lady and a Beautiful Young Singing-Man*. Like its predecessor, this appeared without Crowne's name on the title-page, but unlike the *Daeneids*, the dedication is unsigned. However, as Grosse has pointed out,¹⁵² Crowne's authorship is proved by a reference to the *Daeneids* in the epistle to the reader. The introduction of Minnum, the hero of *The History of the Famous and Passionate Love*, as one of the three champions of the Dean in the *Daeneids* in the place of the barber Lamour, shows that Crowne had the material for his later poem in mind while he was imitating *Le Lutrin*. Like the *Daeneids*, the new poem was written in part as a satire against the Catholic clergy.

The story of *The History of the Famous and Passionate Love* may be given very briefly. A noble and beautiful Parisian lady marries a Marquis because of his position in society. She has no love for him and he seeks diversion elsewhere. In revenge she looks about for a lover and is charmed by the manly voice of Minnum, a young singing-man. She fights against her desires, but in her wretchedness confesses her passion to her maid who acts as go-between. Minnum is engaged to marry Lavinia, niece to the Dean of Notre-Dame, and the Dean, hearing rumors of Minnum's intrigue, forces him to marry Lavinia or lose his office. The Marquise pleads with her lover, but he is obdurate; and cursing him, she returns to her husband. Minnum later feels a return of the old passion for her, but the Marquise spurns him, and he marries Lavinia.

¹⁵¹ Edward Ward, *The Miracles Perform'd by Money*. London, 1692, p. 6.

¹⁵² Inasmuch as *The History of the Famous and Passionate Love* is not accessible to me, I have been forced to rely upon the account of Grosse, pp. 102-110. Crowne's authorship of the poem had already been noted in the British Museum Catalogue.

Crowne's poem is a parody of the love episode between Dido and Aeneas.¹⁵³ Both the characters and the action are burlesqued. Minnum and the Parisian lady correspond to Aeneas and Dido, while Anna is coarsely parodied in Fan, maid of the Marquise. Jupiter is replaced by the Dean of Notre-Dame, who controls the destiny of Minnum as the god does that of Aeneas. Lavinia, the niece of the Dean, as the destined bride of Minnum, reproduces the name and rôle of Vergil's Lavinia, whom Aeneas must marry.¹⁵⁴ Crowne does not carry through consistently the burlesque of his original, and often it becomes more of a translation than a parody. This is especially true of his descriptions of Fame and Night and the simile of the oak. The most noteworthy mock-heroic feature, perhaps, is the Parisian lady's curse of Minnum in imitation of the doom which Dido calls down upon Aeneas. The bonfire of violins, flutes, harps, and guitars which the Marquise kindles is a grotesque take-off upon Dido's funeral pyre and has no natural place in Crowne's poem. Among the characters the Marquise alone takes on any strikingly independent traits. She becomes a typical Parisian coquette.

As a poem *The History of the Famous and Passionate Love* has little value and was the butt of contemporary satire. In a poem called *The beginning of the First Satyr of Persius imitated. The Prologue, to Dr. M—dly*, probably written by Charles Gildon, occur the following lines:

"I, who have never pass'd as yet
The test of the mis-judging Pit . . .
Nor from the tender Boxes e'r
Yet have drawn one pitying tear:
Nor with Sir Courtly, Roundelays
Have made to garnish out new Plays,
Nor Virgil's great majestick Lines
Melted into enervate Rhimes. . . ."¹⁵⁵

While Crowne was thus engaged in poetic excursions outside of his ordinary field of literary endeavor, he contributed a song or two to *The Gentleman's Journal*. They were set to music by Henry Purcell, the famous composer of the time.

¹⁵³ Vergil, *Aeneid*, Lib. IV.

¹⁵⁴ Grosse, p. 107, considers Lavinia an original creation with Crowne, who parodies the idea that the future of Aeneas lies in Latium; but she was clearly taken from Vergil's Lavinia. See the *Aeneid*, Lib. VII.

¹⁵⁵ *Miscellany Poems upon Several Occasions* collected by Charles Gildon. London, 1692, pp. 99-101. In addition to the evidence which they give of contemporary opinion, Gildon's lines add materially to the proof of Crowne's authorship of the burlesque.

Several months after the publication of the *Daeneids*, Crowne's next play was brought out. The tragedy *Regulus* was played early in June, 1692, but did not prove a success. It was drawn very largely from a recently produced drama by Nicholas Pradon, a minor French writer of tragedy.¹⁵⁶ In the year 1693 Crowne was apparently engaged on his new comedy, since an anticipatory announcement of it appeared in *The Gentleman's Journal* for November.¹⁵⁷ Part of the summer of this year he spent in the Netherlands, as there is notice of a pass granted to him "to go to Holland" on June 29, 1693.¹⁵⁸ What the occasion of the excursion was, we cannot say. At length the anticipated comedy was finished, and *The Married Beau* was acted in May, 1694. It achieved a greater success than had been Crowne's lot since the appearance of *Sir Courtly Nice* nearly a decade earlier. With the production of *The Married Beau* the period of Crowne's prosperity and prominence as a dramatist draws to a close. Theatrical conditions were changing and the dramatists with whom he had been associated were no longer producing plays. Some of them, as Otway, Shadwell, and Lee, were dead, while others, like Dryden and Wycherley, had retired from play-writing. Younger men of brilliant talents, like Congreve, Farquhar, and Vanbrugh, were coming forward, and with these Crowne could not compete. Of Crowne's life during the nine years which we have just been considering, we know but little. He does not complain of financial distress during this period, and while some of his plays were not successful, he must have received fairly large returns from others. There is no record of his third day receipts from *Sir Courtly Nice*, but Downes records of Shadwell's *Squire of Alsatia* (1688), that "the Poet received for his third Day in the House in Drury-Lane at Single Prizes 130 l. which was the greatest Receipt they ever had at that House at Single Prizes."¹⁵⁹ We may infer that Crowne's receipts were also large. The success of *Darius* was not great, partly because of the illness of Mrs. Barry; yet Lord Granville records that the author "had a most extraordinary third day by reason of the King's presence at it,"¹⁶⁰ and Crowne himself admits that he was handsomely paid.¹⁶¹ A half dozen years later Southerne received for *The Fatal*

¹⁵⁶ See below, Chapter II, p. 161ff.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 164-165.

¹⁵⁸ *State Papers, Domestic*, 1693, p. 202.

¹⁵⁹ *Roscius Anglicanus*, p. 41.

¹⁶⁰ *Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts*. Fifth Report, pp. 197-198.

¹⁶¹ *Works*, III, 371.

Marriage (1694), 140 l. as his third day returns. Fifty noblemen gave him a guinea apiece and the printer, 36 l. for his copy.¹⁶² In view of this figure it is reasonable to suppose that Crowne's receipts for *Darius* approximated these sums. Similarly the financial returns from *The Married Beau* must have been good. During this period, moreover, Crowne was not altogether dependent upon his efforts as a playwright. In the dedication of *Caligula* to the Earl of Rumney he writes: "Your Lordship address to the late Queen of ever-blessed memory, in my behalf, and, by your intercession I had a large share of her princely bounty; and, no doubt, I should have had more, if England had longer enjoy'd her."¹⁶³ From this statement it appears that Queen Mary did not forget the masque which the now ageing playwright had written for her when she was a princess in her 'teens at the court of her royal uncle.¹⁶⁴

VI. THE LAST YEARS. FINAL EFFORTS TO RECOVER HIS ESTATE.

In the years immediately following the production of *The Married Beau* (1694) Crowne's physical condition was such as to preclude any possibility of literary composition. In the epistle to the reader prefaced to *Caligula* (1698) the author wrote: "I have for some few years been disorder'd with a distemper, which seated itself in my head, threatened me with an epilepsy, and frequently took from me not only all sense, but almost all signs of life, and in my intervals I wrote this play."¹⁶⁵ This mental disorder seems to have afflicted him principally in 1695 and 1696, for we have no record of him during this time. In the spring of 1697, however, his health may have improved, for in April of that year he showed a fresh interest in his lost estate in America. On April 17th he presented a petition to the Council of Trade and Plantations in which he reviews his father's claims and adds, "I beg that a clause may be inserted in Lord Belloment's instructions to give all just and convenient countenance to me for the recovery of my estate, in order that the planters may settle there, which they will be afraid to do without leave from me owing to the age and validity

¹⁶² Malone-Boswell, *Variorum Shakespeare*, III, 162-164, Note 8.

¹⁶³ *Works*, IV, 350.

¹⁶⁴ See below, Chapter II, p. 79.

¹⁶⁵ *Works*, IV, 352.

of my title."¹⁶⁶ This seems to have been the first formal effort of Crowne to recover his property since his futile attempt to get Mounthope or Boston Neck in 1679 and 1680. Yet his lost possessions seem to have been constantly in the poet's mind. In his dedication to *The English Frier* (1690) he refers to the loss of them pointedly as the circumstance which made him a dependent at court.¹⁶⁷

The petition of April, 1697, was followed in January, 1698, by a long memorial which recites the English claim to Penobscot and the alleged mistreatment of the playwright's father by Temple. Crowne's contention was that Sir Thomas Temple went beyond his instructions in surrendering Penobscot to the French as a result of the treaty of Breda, and upon this he bases his claim. Thus he states in the latter part of the memorial:

"When King Charles was informed of what Sr. Thomas Temple had done he was extremely displeas'd with it; and wou'd not consent to it. Not long after a war broke out between ffrance and Holland. And the Dutch tooke the fort at Penobscot from ye ffrench; and levell'd it wth ye ground, and then entirely quitted it.

"Not long after, King Charles commission'd the Governour of New Yorke to take Penobscot, and the lands belonging to it under his jurisdiction. And the Governor of New York did accordingly and put a garrison in ye said trading house at Negue alias Crownes point. William Croune being deceased, his eldest son John Croune having information that his Royall Highness ye Duke of Yorke had begg'd Penobscot of ye King, the said John Croune petitioned his Highness to restore him ye inheritance, which his father had purchased, and his Highness referred him to ye commissioners of his revenue. And the cause lay before them undetermin'd during ye latter end of King Charles's reign, and all ye reigne of ye late King James."¹⁶⁸

On March 16, 1698, Crowne presented a second petition to the same Council in which he briefly reviews the claims made in the memorial, and adds: "I beg that, in view of the settlement of boundaries in America by Commissioners of England and France, my claim to these lands may be heard."¹⁶⁹

About the time of the second petition Crowne's last tragedy,

¹⁶⁶ *State Papers, Colonial*, 1696-97, p. 452.

¹⁶⁷ *Works*, IV, 19.

¹⁶⁸ *Gay Transcripts. State Papers*, IX, 1-9. It is to be found also in J. P. Baxter's *History*, *op. cit.*, X, 25-30.

¹⁶⁹ *State Papers, Colonial*, 1697-98. p. 137.

Caligula, was acted. It was written, he tells us, in his lucid intervals while he was suffering from his mental disorder. It is not remarkable that a play written under such conditions should be lacking in any particular merit. Like many of Crowne's tragedies it seems to have been of doubtful success upon the stage.

Apparently no progress was made by the Council of Trade and Plantations on Crowne's second petition during the remainder of 1698. According to the Journal of that Board, however, he attended a meeting at their request on January 18, 1699, and gave an oral account of his title to Penobscot.¹⁷⁰ This he promised to reduce to writing, and on the following day he presented another memorial, which was read at the meeting of February 10th. Search of the records showed that the land had been transferred to the Colony of Massachusetts-Bay in 1691, but on May 30, 1699, the matter was still under investigation.¹⁷¹

Meanwhile the poet was struggling to earn a livelihood from the theatre. Having, it seems, regained something of his strength and vigor, he made a final effort in the field of comedy, in which formerly he had almost invariably succeeded. *Justice Busy, or the Gentleman Quack* was produced probably in 1700 at the new little playhouse built by Betterton, Mrs. Bracegirdle, and Mrs. Barry in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. Like *Caligula*, however, it was not a success, and it was never printed.

At last, impatient at the inactivity of the Council of Trade and Plantations, Crowne presented a petition directly to William III on June 17, 1700. In this appeal, after reviewing the case, he asked that the commissioners should be ordered to hear his title and that meantime he might receive something for costs and for his present support.¹⁷² On July 26th the petition was reviewed by the king and the petitioner was summoned to attend the Board of Trade and Plantations. Four days later he appeared and was directed to draw up a plain state of his title.¹⁷³ His paper was received on August 9th.¹⁷⁴ In November, 1700, he placed further proof of his claims in the hands of the Council,¹⁷⁵ but it was not until January 21, 1701, that they had agreed upon their report. This was sent to the Privy

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 1699, p. 20.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 22, 61, 65, 258-259.

¹⁷² *State Papers, Colonial*, 1700, pp. 344-345.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 430, 445.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 474.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 663-664.

Council on the following day, and on January 23rd an order of the king in council directed that Crowne's petition be given to Mr. Secretary Vernon.¹⁷⁶ According to the account in the Acts of the Privy Council, dated January 29, 1702, however, "nothing further was done before his Majesty's departure for Holland, but, on petitioning for relief, Crowne received 50 l. from the Treasury which is now spent." The account continues: "The claims of the French having prevailed at the Treaty of Ryswick, the land can be of no use to the petitioner till they are compelled to recognize it as a part of his Majesty's dominions."¹⁷⁷

The report of the Privy Council just quoted refers presumably to a petition with Crowne made on July 24, 1701, to the Lords Justices of England. In this document he states that he is almost in want of bread and asks for something to meet his present needs and for a recommendation of future charity and bounty, "neither of which can be displeasing to His Majesty, a just and gracious Prince, who, for all regal virtues, is greatly fam'd and belov'd by all." It is minuted on the document, "8 Augt 1701. Fifty Pounds. Paid out of Sec. Ser. 9th Aug. 1701."¹⁷⁸

On March 8, 1702, William III died and Anne became queen of England. It is likely that Crowne welcomed the change in spite of his regard for the late king. Anne remembered that the playwright had written a masque for her and her sister, and when soon after her accession he petitioned anew, it is recorded under date of June 22, 1702, that she was willing to favor him. His petition acknowledges the grant of 50 l. in the previous summer. His wants are again very great, however, and he prays for restoration of his lands and relief of his present necessities.¹⁷⁹ From that time he seems to have depended upon the bounty of Queen Anne as his only source of support during his declining days. About December 23, 1703, he petitioned the Lord High Treasurer stating that his wants were more than he was able to bear, and his debts more than he could pay. He therefore prays for relief. On the document it is minuted: "23 Dec. 1703. To have 50 li paid."¹⁸⁰ There are two notices of 50 l. payments to Crowne in the *Money Book*, and the editor of the *Treasury Papers* refers to one made on December

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 1701, pp. 41, 45, 47.

¹⁷⁷ *Acts of the Privy Council, Colonial*. The Unbound Papers, p. 10.

¹⁷⁸ *Treasury Papers*, 1697-1701-2, p. 513.

¹⁷⁹ *State Papers, Domestic*, 1702-3, p. 130.

¹⁸⁰ *Treasury Papers*, 1702-7, p. 218.

24, 1705. There is recorded a final petition to the Lord High Treasurer made about November 30, 1706, in which the poet states that he is sunk into deep necessities by the loss of his land in America, and prays for a further extension of his Lordship's goodness. He is not disappointed, for we find a marginal entry: "To be paid 50 li."¹⁸¹ Thereafter the treasury papers are silent concerning John Crowne. Presumably the charity of Queen Anne, like that of others, had its limits.

The date of Crowne's death, like that of his birth, has been shrouded in uncertainty. A. T. Bartholomew, writing of Crowne in *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, says that he "seems to have been alive in 1701."¹⁸² Most of the older biographers, however, following a manuscript note by Oldys in a copy of Langbaine's *Account of the English Dramatic Poets* to the effect that Crowne was alive in 1703, state that he died shortly afterwards.¹⁸³ As a matter of fact the poverty-stricken and superannuated playwright lived for a half dozen years after the last recorded entry of Queen Anne's charity. He died late in April 1712, and was buried in the church of St. Giles-in-the-Fields on the twenty-seventh of the month. Although it was a common practice at St. Giles to record the parentage of the deceased, in the case of John Crowne only his name and burial date are given—mute testimony of the obscurity into which the once popular Restoration playwright had fallen.¹⁸⁴

Very little contemporary comment upon Crowne's last years has come down to us. To this period, however, belong the recollections of an old man writing in *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1745: "Many a cup of metheglin have I drank with little starch'd Johnny Crown; we called him so from the stiff unalterable primness of his long cravat."¹⁸⁵ Like many another man the playwright may have been able to forget occasionally the wretchedness of his circumstances in the company of jovial companions around the

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 474.

¹⁸² VIII, 189.

¹⁸³ Grosse, p. 18, is of this opinion also.

¹⁸⁴ The "Burial" Book of the Church of St. Giles-in-the-Fields. I am indebted to my friend, Professor Alwin Thaler of the University of California, for much assistance in discovering the evidence for Crowne's death date. Oldys in his manuscript annotations in a copy of Langbaine stated that Crowne was buried in St. Giles-in-the-Fields. Sir William Muirgrave in his *Obituary Prior to 1800*, II, 116 (*Publications of the Harleian Society*, XLV, 1900), recorded Crowne's death date as 1712, but failed to give the source of his information. It may be interesting to note in passing that St. Giles is the burial place of such well-known literary figures of the seventeenth century as James Shirley, Andrew Marvel, and Sir Roger L'Estrange.

¹⁸⁵ *The Gentleman's Magazine*, XV (1745), p. 99.

tavern fire. Throughout their long careers the relations between Dryden and Crowne seem to have been cordial. They were both parties to the quarrel with Settle in 1674, as we have had occasion to notice, and in the acrimonious years of the Popish Plot period they were both staunch Tories. Even the Catholic conversion of the greater poet drew no personal satire from his lesser literary rival. Spence, however, had preserved an anecdote told to him by Jacob Tonson, the noted publisher, which indicates that the author of *Absalom and Achitophel* was sometimes jealous of Crowne's theatrical successes. As Spence tells it the story runs thus:

"Even Dryden was very suspicious of Rivals. He would compliment Crown when a play of his failed, but he was cold to him if he met with success. He used sometimes to own that Crown had some genius; but then he added, 'that his father and Crown's mother were well acquainted'."¹⁸⁶

It is much to be regretted that Dennis did not fulfil his promise to continue his account from the death of Charles II to the death of Crowne.¹⁸⁷ As it is we are limited to meagre official notices.

VII. THE RELIGION AND POLITICS OF CROWNE

The religious and political convictions of a man had much to do with his prominence in public life and in literary circles in the last sixty years of the seventeenth century. John Crowne's father early cast his lot with Parliament in the Civil War period, and during the rule of Oliver Cromwell as Lord High Protector he rose to a position of considerable prominence in Shropshire, and even in London where he sat as a member of Parliament in 1654. Thus from his connection with the Commonwealth government we may infer that he was a dissenter in religion and a liberal in politics. In America he became a freeman of Boston in 1660, and a number of years later joined with the townsfolk of Mendon in the democratic government of the new community. Here, as we have seen, he served as town register for a number of years and was influential among the townspeople.

Unlike Col. Crowne, at least in his later years, his playwright son was an Anglican in religion.¹⁸⁸ It is likely that the rigid discipline of his puritanical training in New England caused him upon

¹⁸⁶ Joseph Spence, *Anecdotes, Observations, and Characters*, p. 45.

¹⁸⁷ Dennis, I, 54.

¹⁸⁸ In the dedication to *The Ambitious Statesman* (1679) Crowne says: "I am very safe, since I agree with the Noble Kingdom in faith and worship." (*Works*, III, 142).

his return to London to associate himself with the freer, more fashionable practices of the Established Church. Yet with the agitation of the Popish Plot years and later he was more violent in his opposition to Catholicism and more severe in his satire upon Popish institutions and practices than many dissenters. I have suggested elsewhere that this animosity against the Catholic religion may well have been an abiding influence of Crowne's collegiate training in the puritanical Harvard.¹⁸⁹ The playwright's outspoken opposition first asserted itself in the stormy times which followed the revelations and accusations of Titus Oates in 1678. In *The Ambitious Statesman* (1679) the Constable says to his son:

"Go be a monk, in hope of being sainted,
Give friars all thy gold in the rich hopes
When thou art dead, they'll tip thy skull with silver;
Stink all thy life, to be adored when dead,
And have thy rotten bones to cure lame legs."¹⁹⁰

The Miseries of Civil-War (1680) was political rather than religious in its satire. Only a few strongly anti-catholic references occur. When King Edward is accused by Lady Elianor Butler of breaking his contract with her, he says he will get a dispensation from the Pope. Thereupon Elianor exclaims:

"What then his Holiness will be your pardon?
A very excellent office for a Pope
To be the Universal Bawd of Christendom!
A very excellent Shepherd, that will give,
His sheep a dispensation to be rotten!"¹⁹¹

The escape of Edward from the custody of the Archbishop of York gives Crowne an opportunity to satirize the priesthood through the remarks of Warwick.¹⁹² In the epilogue, referring to "that fowl Monster Civil-War", the author pays his respects to the dissenters as well:

"How ugly then she is when ridden blind
With Pope before and Presbyter behind."¹⁹³

In the same play he satirizes dissenting ministers and their flocks. (*Works*, III, 184). Two years earlier in the epilogue to *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, Part I, he refers to the

"Fanaticks, who'll be angry with us all,
For ripping up their base original.
Shewing their aires, the Pharisees, from whom
They and their cheats by long succession come."

(*Works*, II, 310).

Again in the epilogue to *The Miseries of Civil-War* he refers to the time of his youth:

"When graceless Rogues did Fight about free-grace."

¹⁸⁹ See above, p. 28.

¹⁹⁰ *Works*, III, 203-204.

¹⁹¹ *The Miseries of Civil-War*, p. 55.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, Epilogue.

In his later adaptation, *Henry the Sixth, the First Part* (1681), religious satire is the *raison d'être* of the piece. As the author says in his prologue, he has added to the Shakespearean version "a little Vinegar against the Pope." In his dedication Crowne explains his purpose more fully. Referring to Catholics, he says: "There is not a Tool us'd in the murder of Duke Humphrey in this Play, but what is taken out of their own Church Armory, nor a word put into the mouth of the Cardinal and his foolish Instruments, but what first dropt from the Heads that adorn their own Church Battlements." Further he comments upon the evil effects of holy-days and upon the prayers of his Third Murderer which he drew from contemporary French books of devotion: "To expose these Follies to the People," he concludes, "is the business of this Play."¹⁹⁴ In the play itself the chief vehicle of Crowne's satire is the Cardinal, whose cynicism is used to expose the evils of the Roman religion. Two whole scenes are given over almost entirely to satire. The miracle of Simpcox's receiving his sight, from the older play, was easily converted by Crowne to his purposes.¹⁹⁵ To this he added a scene between the Cardinal and the three murderers in which the impoverishing effects of frequent holy-days are revealed, and the utter non-sense of certain prayers is exposed.¹⁹⁶

Crowne's next play, *Thyestes* (1681), made on the framework of Seneca's play, would seem to offer small opportunity for venting religious animosity, but "where there's a will, there's a way." When Philisthenes is bound by Greek priests in order that he may become the victim of Atreus's revenge, Crowne lets the youth address them thus:

"Kings wrong themselves
And all the world, they do not hang you all;
For kings are never safe, nor subjects good,
Where priests prevail; you keep the power of Kings,
And only let 'em have what share you please.
You take the foolish people's consciences,
And give 'em back what honesty you please;
You keep the keys of women's chambers too,
And let men have what share in 'em you please:
When you deliver up a marriage lock,
You still reserve a key for your own use:
But men or women may play any game
And cheat their fill, if they will pay your box."¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ *Henry the Sixth, the First Part*, Dedication.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-26.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 50-54.

¹⁹⁷ *Works*, II, 66.

Such a pronouncement is an anachronism in the play, and reminds one of the rabid anti-Jesuit pamphlets of the day.

With the discrediting of the testimony of Titus Oates and the fall of Shaftesbury, comparative calm returned to England, and Crowne's animosity slumbered for a time. The attempts of James II to foster his religion and to get tolerance for it must have galled Crowne, but he was compelled to be silent. With the coming of William of Orange in 1688, however, his suppressed opposition was again given free rein, and in *The English Friar* (1689) he assailed the Jesuit order in his severest fashion. Although Father Finical is borrowed from the *Tartuffe* of Molière, it was Crowne who made him a friar. He retains the hypocrisy, avarice and sensuality of Tartuffe, but his clerical exterior makes his vices all the more striking. His identification with Edward Petre, King James II's Jesuit privy councillor gives to the satire even greater force. As Crowne says in his prologue,

"he does make bold a farce to shew

Priests made and acted here some months ago."¹⁹⁸

Moreover, the prefatory matter bristles with condemnation of Catholicism, and with indignation against the Englishmen who had forsaken the Protestant faith during the late reign. Whatever may be said for Crowne's fervor against the elder religion, he was sincere in his utterances and never changed his belief.

The final satirical utterance of the playwright is associated with the year 1692. At that time he made his only extensive efforts in non-dramatic verse in two comic poems, both of which contain religious satire. The *Daeneids*, a partial translation of Boileau's *Lutrin*, as we have had occasion to note, attacks the indolence of the priesthood and the petty strife of the clerics. The later supplementary poem, *The History of the Famous and Passionate Love*, is likewise directed against the Catholic clergy.¹⁹⁹ Crowne had such an "aversion" for priests that even the pagan Hiarbas in *Regulus* (1692) is painted as unscrupulous and a lover of luxury.²⁰⁰ With the firm establishment of William and Mary upon the English throne, the danger of Catholic domination disappeared and Crowne allowed his opposition to subside.

In his political views as well as in his religious beliefs the playwright son of Col. Crowne early showed a divergence from

¹⁹⁸ *Works*, IV, 27.

¹⁹⁹ Grosse, p. 102.

²⁰⁰ *Works*, IV, 154.

his father's point of view. It is probable that the younger Crowne would have become a Tory at the court of Charles II under any circumstances; it was the natural course for those who desired to be influential and successful. In any case, the surrender of his father's estate by Temple to the French in 1670 forced such a course upon him. Two important circumstances of his life were the immediate result of that action. In the first place, "this loss," says Crowne, "made me run into that Madness call'd Poetry, and inhabit that Bedlam call'd a Stage."²⁰¹ Secondly, "This fixt me in a dependence upon that court [of Charles II], for I could have my compensation no where else."²⁰² Therefore very early in his dramatic work he began what Genest calls "his career of loyalty."²⁰³ In *The History of Charles the Eighth of France* he tickled the ears of Charles II with such lines as

"It is a safer thing

To blaspheme Heav'n, than to depose a King."²⁰⁴

and

"Subjects or Kingdoms are but trifling things

When laid together in the scale with Kings."²⁰⁵

He dedicated the play to John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, with whom he was then but slightly acquainted, but whose influence at court was great. The move was far-sighted, for in 1674 Rochester introduced the young playwright to the court and secured for him the commission for writing the masque *Calisto*.²⁰⁶ This favor was due less to the dedication than to the nobleman's desire to humble Dryden and Settle; but so far as Crowne was concerned, the results were the same. He had secured the attention of the king, and he made the best of his opportunity. The merry Charles must have smiled to himself at Mercury's remark:

"How useful, and of what delight

Is sovereign power? 'tis that determines right.

Nothing is truly good, but what is great."²⁰⁷

Yet the poet won the king's favor and bounty by his production,

²⁰¹ *Henry the Sixth, the First Part*. Dedication.

²⁰² *Works*, IV, 19.

²⁰³ Genest, I, 124.

²⁰⁴ *Works*, I, 139.

²⁰⁵ *Works*, I, 163.

²⁰⁶ Mrs. Rose A. Wright in her dissertation on *The Political Play of the Restoration* (Yale) p. 121, says, "Crowne became known as a dramatist through the favor of Lawrence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, by whom he was asked to write a masque for the court. Hyde was not created Earl of Rochester until 1681. John Wilmot, the profligate second earl, was the one who favored our author.

²⁰⁷ *Works*, I, 264.

and in the following year, 1675, Charles enjoyed *The Country Wit* so much that the author was further honored.²⁰⁸

In the earlier years of Crowne's dramatic career the line of demarcation between the political parties was not clearly established, but with the convulsions which grew out of the Popish Plot a man became definitely either a Whig or a Tory. There were several reasons why Crowne should be a Tory during these years. He had won the king's favor and through it hoped to recover his father's estate. Anything therefore which endangered the king's power and prerogative, lessened his chances of a successful appeal. The claim of Oates and his followers that there was a plot to murder Charles and enthrone a Catholic king aroused Crowne to proclaim the divine right of kings vigorously in *The Ambitious Statesman* (1679).

"Princes are sacred!

Whate'er religion rebels may pretend,
Murderers of Kings are worshippers of devils,
They who derive all power from the people,
Do basely bastardise it with that buckler
Which fell from heaven to protect innocence.
They protect villainy; no sacrilege
Greater than when a rebel with his sword
Dares cut the hand of Heaven from King's commissions,
To hide the devil's mark upon his own."²⁰⁹

When the dangers of civil war threatened the kingdom as a result of the turmoil, and there seemed danger of a repetition of the strife of nearly forty years earlier, the playwright came forward with a Shakespearean adaptation to teach the people the inevitable result of such efforts. *The Miseries of Civil-War* (1680) undertook to show in what sad case the nation would be

"With Pope before, and Presbyter behind."

At the end of the play King Edward points to the fate of rebels and Usurpers, and adds:

"A Monarch's Right is an unshaken Rock."²¹⁰

In his later Shakespearean perversion, *Henry the Sixth, the First Part*, Crowne forsook political questions temporarily, to indulge once more in religious satire;²¹¹ but in 1682 he became in

²⁰⁸ *Works*, III, 17.

²⁰⁹ *Works*, III, 239-240.

²¹⁰ *The Miseries of Civil-War*, p. 71.

²¹¹ Beljame in his *Le Public et les Hommes de Lettres en Angleterre au Dix-huitième Siècle*, p. 211-212, remarked: "Crowne, en 1679, est tory et prêche avec ferveur l'obéissance passive; en 1681 il est whig et attaque les catholiques; en 1683 il redevient

City Politiques the most outspoken of the Tory playwrights. The extreme political satire of the play we shall consider later;²¹² suffice it to say that the Whig leaders are ridiculed in the most audacious fashion. So pointed was its satire, indeed, that the interference of Charles II was necessary to force Lord Arlington, a secret Whig, to allow its production.²¹³ Crowne's comic masterpiece, *Sir Courtly Nice*, contains only two characters with political significance, and in them the poet raises himself above petty partisanship to satirize exceptional characters of both political factions. Testimony is a fanatic dissenter, but his creator could not resist the temptation of giving him a touch of hypocrisy. Hothead is a Tory to whom any canting dissenter is anathema. He is also satirized, but more gently than Testimony, and one feels that Crowne more or less sympathizes with him.

The events of King James II's reign led Crowne, like many other fervid Tories, to see the error of supporting the Stuart succession at all hazards; and when the Catholic king was forced to flee in 1688, the playwright welcomed the change and revised his political views. His severe satire of priests in *The English Friar* was not of itself an indication of political conversion, but now he opposed himself to those who were

"so mad, they'd give up England's glory,

Only to keep the wretched name of Tory."²¹⁴

In his dedication he attempts to vindicate his tardy relinquishment of Tory principles:

" 'Tis true I oppos'd some that oppos'd the faults of Courts; but 'twas because I thought they did it in so faulty a manner, as made the better cause appear the worse, and confounded it with many a bad one."²¹⁵

Eight years later, in the dedication to *Caligula* (1698), Crowne shows that his support of Whig interests had become whole-hearted. He writes:

"This revolution . . . has been so happy to England and the greatest part of Europe. Had not this change been, almost

tory et attaque les whigs et les protestants; après la Révolution il redevient whig." Beljame was mistaken in thinking that Crowne became a Whig because he satirized Catholics in 1681. His opposition to Catholicism ran its course independent of his political views and was not determined by them. He could satirize his religious enemies side by side with the Whigs, but the next year he could ridicule these same Whig writers from a political point of view. Crowne's Toryism continued unchanged throughout the reign of Charles II.

²¹² See below, Chapter II, p. 127ff.

²¹³ Dennis, I, 50.

²¹⁴ *Works*, IV, 27.

²¹⁵ *Works*, IV, 19.

all Europe had been overrun by France; England, for certain, had lost its right, liberties, and religion, and perhaps been no more a kingdom, but a province to France, a vassal to vassals, and for all its wealth had nothing but a wafer. What could have stop'd that inundation of power which was rolling on, and swelling as it roll'd, delug'd many parts of Europe, and threatened all? What could a formidable fleet and army, almost innumerable, have ask'd of a few divided councillors, at Whitehall, which they durst have deny'd? And what a glorious figure does England now make, in comparison of what it did some years ago. It lay one reign becalmed in luxury, in another fettered. In this reign it has not only freed itself, but humbled France and protected Germany, Spain, and Holland, and appears one of the greatest powers in christendom."²¹⁶

Doubtless there is an element of opportunism in these remarks, for in 1698 Crowne had renewed hopes of regaining his New England estate; but self-interest apart, he was a patriotic Englishman and saw clearly the errors of the court at which he had made his obeisance.

VIII. THE PERSONALITY OF THE MAN.

Concerning the personal appearance of John Crowne very little evidence has come down to us. No portrait of him is known. In 1678 Rochester described him as "little Starch'd Johnny C—" with "his Crevat-string new Iron'd" and "his lilly white Hand,"²¹⁷ and in 1745 an old man, recalling the authors and players of the time of Charles II, still called him "little starch'd Johnny Crown" and explained, "We called him so from the stiff unalterable primness of his long cravat."²¹⁸ From these brief comments it appears that Crowne was a man of small stature, and one who retained a prim, puritanical mode of dress as the most striking feature of his personal appearance.

These are only external traits, however; of the man's mental outlook and of his moral disposition a good idea may be formed from the prefatory matter in his published works. In the earlier period of his career Crowne showed the customary deference to the noblemen whose names graced his dedications, but in his addresses to readers and audiences he is frequently arrogant and full of self-assurance. In the preface to *Andromache* this attitude is revealed in his characteristic reference to French playwrights: "I

²¹⁶ *Works*, IV, 348.

²¹⁷ *The . . . Works of the Duke of Buckingham*, 1707, I, 44-45.

²¹⁸ *The Gentleman's Magazine*, XV, (1745), p. 99.

would no more be at the pains to bestow Wit (if I had any) on a French Play, than I would be at the cost to bestow Cloaths on every shabby Frenchman that comes over; for neither of 'em would have qualities to deserve my Charity."²¹⁹ When, several years later, he was accused of using Racine's *Bérénice* in the second part of *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, he replied: "That borrowing or stealing from Mr. Racine could not have supplied my occasions; but I am not so necessitous yet, nor have lived so prodigally on my small stock of poetry, to be put so soon to those miserable shifts."²²⁰ Yet as we shall see, he was under considerable obligations to the French dramatist.²²¹ In the same passage he has the objectionable self-complacency to remark: "I love not too much carefulness in small things. To be exact in trifles is the business of a little Genius."²²² Other examples might be cited of this arrogance, but perhaps these will suffice. As a result of this attitude Crowne roused considerable opposition. A part of the audiences which viewed *The Countrey Wit* showed their hostility; yet the author takes credit to himself "that no less than a confederacy was necessary to ruin my reputation."²²³ In the preface to *The Ambitious Statesman* his enemies are again brought forward. "Nothing is gotten by poetry," he says, "but a little reputation, and that some envious enemies of ours will rather fling to the dogs than let us have it. Witness the silly malice of some adversaries of mine, who, because my Epilogue had great success, would let anything rather than me be the author."²²⁴ During the years of political and religious turmoil from 1678 to 1690 Crowne incurred enmity on other scores, but there must have been something in his personality also to account for the vindictive uproar which greeted the first performance of *The English Friar*. Some of the opposition was due to the aloofness which he cultivated for ordinary men. "I never did, or will, make court to multitudes," he says, "and therefore they never did, or will, make court to me."²²⁴

In spite of his dislike for the crowd, Crowne was not in sympathy with the life of the courtiers. Dennis says, "He had . . . a Mortal Aversion to the Court. The Promise of a Sum of Money made him sometimes appear there to solicit the Payment of it:

²¹⁹ Preface to *Andromache*, 1675.

²²⁰ *Works*, II, 238.

²²¹ See below, Chapter II, p. 100ff.

²²² *Works*, III, 17.

²²³ *Works*, III, 147.

²²⁴ *Works*, IV, 22-23.

But as soon as he had got it, he vanish'd and continued a long time absent from it."²²⁵ The poet himself says, "I never had a talent for begging, following, and waiting; the principal qualifications requisite in a man who will make his fortunes in the Court; but they were always more burdensome to me than any misery which I yet felt."²²⁶ He was probably most at home sitting in some tavern over his "cup of metheglin" with a few of the literati. Apparently he never married. Indeed, there was little of the glamor of romance in his life. Although he introduces conventional love episodes into his plays because of the demands of the time, he complains of the "whinings of love" which "like a pretty new tune, please for a while, but are soon laid aside, and never thought of more."²²⁷ He apologizes for the saintly women whom he creates, and adds his opinion of their sex.

"They shall be saints no where but on the stage."²²⁸

On wife-hood and marriage he comments, perhaps jocosely, in one of the epilogues:

"A wife has e'er since Eve been thought an evil,
The first that danc'd at weddings was a devil.
At the first wedding all mankind miscarried,
Old Adam ne'er was wicked till he married."²²⁹

Crowne's literary ethics did not vary much from contemporary standards. A writer might admit his indebtedness to Molière and Racine, or he might not. The public was vaguely conscious of the borrowings and thought nothing of them. Crowne's chief offence in this regard was a tendency to misstate the amount of his indebtedness. In the case of his Shakespearean adaptations he says of *The Miseries of Civil-War*

"The Divine Shakespear did not lay one stone,"²³⁰

and of *Henry the Sixth, the First Part*, that Shakespeare had "no Title to the 40th part of it;"²³¹ yet both statements are brazen perversions of the truth. Similarly he denies use of Racine's *Bérénice* in *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, although he was in fact considerably influenced by it.

The absence of details with regard to Crowne's private life prevents us from ascertaining much concerning his personal reli-

²²⁵ Dennis, I, 50.

²²⁶ *Works*, IV, 234.

²²⁷ *Works*, II, 238.

²²⁸ *Works*, II, 311.

²²⁹ *Works*, III, 240.

²³⁰ *The Miseries of Civil-War*, Prologue.

²³¹ *Henry the Sixth, the First Part*, Dedication.

gion and private morality. The indecency of his comedies is no indication as to his habits of life. He lived in a vicious, cynical age; and as a dramatist dependent upon the success of his plays for a livelihood, he gave the public what they demanded, but he was no better or worse than his more celebrated contemporaries in this regard. His Anglican belief may perhaps have rested easily upon his shoulders, but he was more seriously inclined than most of the Restoration playwrights. Late in life he felt some qualms of conscience concerning the atheism of his heroic Phraartes, and he wrote, "I am sorry there should be any thing under my hand in defense of such a false, pernicious, and detestible an opinion." His concluding sentence, moreover, rings true: "I had rather have no wit, no being, than employ any part of it against him that made me."²⁸² These words, which conclude his last printed address to the reader, may serve likewise to close our sketch of John Crowne.

²⁸² *Works*, IV, 354.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORICAL DISCUSSION OF THE PLAYS.

The dramatic career of John Crowne extended over a period of about thirty years,—the last three decades of the seventeenth century. During that time he wrote eighteen plays and had a hand in the translation of another. Of these the greater number—ten in all—are tragedies, six are comedies, one is a tragi-comedy, and one is called a masque. Only one, the last to be written, has not been preserved. It has been customary among the historians of English dramatic literature to treat Crowne primarily as a writer of tragedy, doubtless because the preponderance of his work lay in that field, but a survey of all his dramatic writings leads one to the conclusion expressed by Langbaine¹ in Crowne's own lifetime that his comedies are a better expression of his ability as a playwright. Only one of his tragedies, the two-part heroic drama entitled *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, achieved a success comparable with that of several of his comedies, and that was due largely to contemporary taste and not to any particular excellence in the tragedy itself. The plays of Crowne do not represent any signal contribution to the dramatic tendencies of his time; but they are the product of an industrious playwright and a careful workman, who studied the demands of his audiences and, without any particular genius for drama, succeeded in writing several plays which had real success upon the stage.

One finds in his works representatives of nearly all the types of plays in vogue during the Restoration period. He began with a tragi-comedy of the variety which Dryden wrote in the early years of his career; he followed that master likewise in the production of riming heroic plays. When Etheredge and Wycherley had pointed the way to a prose comedy of manners, he followed them too, and achieved at least one success, *Sir Courtly Nice*, which served to keep his name alive after most of his other works were forgotten. Finally when Dryden forsook heroic couplets and returned to the blank verse of the later Elizabethan playwrights, Crowne again followed in his footsteps. His most independent tendency, probably, was his occasional reversion to the practice of the Elizabethans.² At a time when most tragedies followed the

¹ Langbaine, p. 90.

² This tendency Crowne followed in common with certain of his contemporaries such as Otway and Southerne.

so-called classical rules, he introduced comic prose scenes in his *Regulus*; and more noteworthy still, he wrote a comedy of manners in the easy flowing blank verse of the type used by Fletcher and Shirley, when the practice of the time was to write in prose.

JULIANA

Crowne's first dramatic effort was a tragi-comedy entitled *Juliana, or the Princess of Poland*, in blank verse, heroic couplets, and prose. It was acted at the old Duke's Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, probably in the summer of 1671; for it was licensed for printing in September of that year,³ and the author, in his dedication, says that "It had the misfortune to be brought into the world in a time when the dogstar was near his reign . . ." and was "left, for the most part, to the mercy of a common audience."⁴ This statement points to the long vacation, when the regular theatre-goers of the court were absent from London. The circumstances of its composition are also disclosed in the dedication:—"This unworthy poem . . . was the off-spring of many confused, raw, indigested, and immature thoughts, pen'd in a crowd, and hurry of business and travel; interrupted and disorder'd by many importunate, not to say insolent affairs of a quite different nature, and lastly, the first-born of this kind that my thoughts ever laboured with to perfection."⁵ Probably the play was not a success on the stage, since the author laments the unfortunate season during which it was produced.

The plot is confused, but may be summarized as follows: During the Interregnum in Poland the government is in the hands of the Cardinal, who, in order to remain in power, has formed a faction. The nobles, who have met at Warsaw to elect a king, are in favor of Juliana, daughter of the late king, and plighted to Ladislaus, Duke of Courland. The Cardinal, hearing of the Duke's secret arrival, offers a reward for his apprehension, and plans to imprison Juliana. She escapes his clutches by the assistance of Counts Sharnofsky and Colimsky, and curses the falseness of the Duke who, she thinks, has betrayed her honor. Meanwhile Courland in disguise engages rooms at the Landlord's inn, whither Paulina, daughter of the Czar of Muscovy, disguised in man's attire, has

³ Title-page of the quarto, 1671; cf. also Edw. Arber, *Term Catalogue*, I, 87.

⁴ *Works*, I, 18.

⁵ *Works*, I, 15.

arrived in pursuit of the Duke to whom she mistakenly thinks herself married. At the same inn is lodged Demetrius, a Russian prince, who thinks Courland has played him false by running away with Paulina.

In the confusion which follows at the inn Paulina discovers Courland's identity, and representing herself as the Duke of Novgorod, challenges him in Demetrius' name to fight. Courland denies that he is married to Paulina, and when she is prevented from fighting with him, she plans revenge. From the Landlord's garden Courland sees Sharnofsky conducting Juliana to Colimsky's house. Following them, he sees Sharnofsky kiss her hand, and thinking her false, draws, and is wounded in the ensuing fight. While the Cardinal's men continue their plotting and are quarrelling with others, Juliana and her attendants arm themselves with pole-axes. The Cardinal desires to treat with the princess, and she engages him in debate. At length the Cardinal challenges Sharnofsky to a combat to determine which is the traitor. Juliana, unwilling to allow Sharnofsky to fight, proposes to give battle herself.

The Cardinal's forces are successful in battle. Demetrius, disguised as Prince Radzeville and determined to be revenged on Courland, captures Juliana and Sharnofsky and reveals himself. He in turn is captured with his prisoners by the Cardinal's men. All three are likely to be killed, when the Duke, recovered from his wound, performs impossible feats in the field and rescues them. The perfidy of the Cardinal is revealed to the people, and they demand the crown for Juliana. The Cardinal, in despair, ends his own life with a poisoned handkerchief, and Juliana is crowned.

Courland now determines to return home, but is aroused by the news that Juliana has resolved to resign the crown and enter a nunnery, and hastens to the palace. The nobles entreat Juliana to retain the crown, but she refuses and is offering it to Sharnofsky when Courland forces his way to the front. Raging with jealousy, the Duke reveals himself and strikes down Sharnofsky. He accuses Juliana of being false and she retaliates by decreeing his death. Paulina, who in disguise has inflamed Courland's jealousy, is revealed as a woman, and tells the story of her marriage with the Duke. The confusion which follows is cleared up by Battista, the servant of Demetrius, who relates how Paulina was tricked into marrying Demetrius under the name of Courland. Demetrius who has pursued Courland with deadly hate, is in despair; but

Paulina agrees to accept him. Courland and Juliana are reconciled, and their latent love springs forth anew. Sharnofsky's wound is reported as not serious, and the happy lovers are proclaimed king and queen. The Landlord of the inn figures in nearly all of the incidents of the play, his character and ludicrous actions serving for comic relief.

An examination of Polish history fails to reveal anything which corresponds even approximately to the main incidents in this play. No duke of Courland plays any such part in Polish affairs as is ascribed to Crowne's Ladislaus. No Polish princess since the days of Hedwig (1382-1386) was ever in a position similar to that of Juliana, and even in her case the similarity is not great. We must conclude, therefore, that the incidents of the play are fictitious and were evolved from the somewhat overcharged imagination of the young playwright. On the other hand, Crowne's choice of Warsaw as a setting, and his use of Polish or pseudo-Polish names for the majority of his characters may in all probability be traced to the interest which Europe was manifesting in Polish affairs at the beginning of the 1670 period. A new playwright, wishing to get his work before the public, could not do better than to let it appear in the guise of romantic history concerning a nation upon which the public eye was then focussed. John Casimir had abdicated as king of Poland in 1668, and there was an interregnum during 1668-1669. This was brought to an end by a convocation of the Diet, and by the spectacular election of Michael Wisnowiechi, a Piast, over three foreign candidates, the prince of Condé, the prince of Neuberg, and Charles of Lorraine. Michael was a weak and improverished prince, and no one was more surprised at his election than himself.⁶ A conspiracy of great nobles was immediately formed under the Primate Prazmowski and the crown general Sobieski as original leaders, with the object of dethroning Michael.⁷ Internal strife among the nobles turned Sobieski's attention to his private affairs, but finally the incursions of the Cossacks under Doroszenko caused him to return to his army. With a small force he drove them back to the Dniester in 1670.⁸ Meanwhile the plotting of the primate was discovered and came to naught.

The interest which western Europe showed in the affairs of

⁶ Bernard Conner, *A History of Poland in Several Letters to Persons of Quality*, London, 1698. I, 144.

⁷ N. A. Salvany, *Histoire du Roi Jean Sobieski* . . . I, 348.

⁸ Salvany, I, 356.

Poland at this time and for the next year or so, when Sobieski made his gallant effort to drive back the invading Tartars and Turks, is seen in a little volume published at London in the spring of 1672 concerning the Cossacks and Tartars and the wars of the former against Poland. Edward Browne, who translated the work from the French of Pierre Chevalier, says in his preface: "Although Ukraine be one of the most remote Regions of Europe, and the Cossackian name very modern; yet hath that Countrey been of late the Stage of Glorious Actions [the campaign of Sobieski]; and the Inhabitants have acquitted themselves with as great valour in Martial Affairs, as any Nation whatsoever; . . . Nor can this short Treatise be unseasonable, since most have their eyes upon this Countrey at present; and it is already feared, that the Turks and Tartars should make their Inroads this Summer into Poland through Ukraine, scarce a Gazette without mentioning something of it . . ."

Crowne may have been familiar with Polish history through the medium of Latin chronicles; but it is more likely that his knowledge was limited to contemporary affairs, accounts of which he might have gleaned from the Gazettes of the time. At least one reference to contemporary history occurs when Sharnofsky is accused of having letters

"to Dorosensko General of the Tartars

To assist you with fifty thousand men,

Ten thousand cassacques should be sure to second him."¹⁰

It is possible, likewise, that the plotting of the primate Prazmowski may have suggested to Crowne the character of the Jesuitical Cardinal. On the other hand, it may be, as Dr. A. W. Ward suggests, that the dramatist had Cardinal Richelieu in mind.¹¹ A few of the Polish names; viz., Ossolinsky, Lubomirsky, Radzeville, and Demetrius seem to have been drawn from the cognomens of contemporary nobles.¹²

Juliana is written partly in blank verse, partly in heroic couplets, while the low comedy parts in which the Landlord appears are in prose. The play shows little promise. The exposition is obscure, and the plot is confused. There is little or no portrayal of character.

¹⁰ *A Discourse of the Original Countrey, Manners, Government, and Religion of the Cossacks*. . . . translated by Edward Browne, London, 1672, preface.

¹¹ *Works*, I, 37.

¹² A. W. Ward, *A History of English Dramatic Literature*, 1879, III, 461.

¹³ *A Discourse of the* . . . *Cossacks*, op. cit., pp. 27, 145, 156.

Moreover the introduction of the song celebrating Juliana's piety, and the dumb show of queens, ghosts, nuns, and angels is awkward. In fact the only redeeming features are the buffoonery of the Landlord and the character of Paulina.

CHARLES VIII.

According to John Downes, the stage prompter, the first new play to be acted at the new Dorset Garden Theatre was Crowne's *The History of Charles the Eighth of France*. Downes says that "it was all new Cloath'd, yet lasted but 6 Days together, but 'twas Acted now and then afterwards." The new theatre was opened on November 9, 1671, with Dryden's *Sir Martin Mar-All*, which ran for three days and was followed by Etheredge's *Love in a Tub*, which had a two-day run.¹³ Whether or not other old plays were revived before the production of *Charles VIII*, Downes does not say, but we are reasonably safe in thinking that Crowne's new play was staged before the end of 1671, and most likely in December. Although it ran but six days, it was probably regarded as a success by both playwright and company. It was first printed in quarto during Michaelmas term 1672.¹⁴ A second edition, also in quarto, appeared in 1680.¹⁵

The plot of *Charles VIII* runs as follows: Charles VIII of France has a claim to the kingdom of Naples through his father, which he decides to enforce by an expedition against the reigning king of the house of Arragon. On his approach to Naples, the people rebel against Alphonso, who abdicates in favor of his son Ferdinand, the people's choice. Ferdinand's outlook is not rosy, for Trivultio, his general, plans to align himself with the stronger force; and the Prince of Salerne, a fiery young rebel, will aid the young king only on condition of winning his sister Isabel as his wife. Isabel had recently become a widow when Lodovico poisoned his nephew, Galeazzo, Duke of Milan, and usurped the power. Before her marriage Charles VIII was her suitor, but through pride she had kept him at a distance. She now spurns Salerne and awaits the approach of Charles. He demands the surrender of the crown by Ferdinand, but the young king replies by sending Trivultio against him. The old general, however, attempts to side

¹³ *Roscius Anglicanus*, London, 1886, pp. 31-2.

¹⁴ Arber, *Term Catalogues*, I, 118.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 404.

with the French, but is scorned by them. Meanwhile Ferdinand, who is in love with Cornelia, widow queen of Cyprus, has detained her ships in the harbor and courts her. She gives him very little satisfaction and he goes out to repel the French. Trivultio and Salerne join in rescuing Ferdinand from a precarious position and gain the upper hand. In this situation Ferdinand meets Charles, and after some haughty words they prepare to fight. Charles admires Ferdinand's bravery and embraces him ere they engage. At this juncture word comes that Trivultio and Salerne are successful and the two kings vie with each other as to which one shall chastise the rebels.

Later the French king, while taking the air of his newly captured city, discovers Ferdinand's sister Julia asleep in a garden, and is enraptured by her beauty. She already has made him her dream prince, and when Trivultio and Salerne attempt to carry out a bloody and desperate plot, Charles defends Julia and puts the rebels to rout. Isabella sees Charles with her sister, and is inflamed with jealous rage against him. In the meantime Queen Cornelia has apparently been lost on a sunken galley following a sea-fight between Ferdinand and Charles VIII's admiral. Ferdinand himself is made prisoner of war and bemoans Cornelia's fate.

Spurred on by jealous hatred, Isabella leagues herself with Trivultio and Salerne, and plots to kill Charles. She even procures a magician, who shows her the spirits of Charles and Julia seated on thrones, and the ghost of Galeazzo, her dead husband, who foretells her early death. Julia, who in concealment has heard all, after some maidenly hesitation warns Charles of his danger. Isabella and her lieutenants make an attempt on Charles's life; but she is mortally wounded, and Salerne, being overcome by Ferdinand, tears open his own wounds, and dies. Cornelia unexpectedly returns alive, having been transferred to another ship in the fight. To the general amazement, Alphonso reappears and offers to resign the crown to Charles, who is overcome by this honorable proposal and gives it back to him, at the same time asking for the hand of Julia. Alphonso reabdicates in favor of Ferdinand, and Cornelia is prevailed upon to become the latter's queen. Isabella, bleeding from mortal wounds, is brought before the court and expires after a second summons by the ghost of Galeazzo.

Charles VIII was written entirely in rime and, though the title of the first quarto, *The History of Charles the Eighth of France*,

might suggest a chronicle play of the Elizabethan period, it belongs distinctly to the heroic type, then in the heyday of its popularity. That it was so regarded at the time of its appearance is indicated by the Duke of Buckingham's reference to Crowne in his "Timon, a Satyr, In Imitation of Monsieur Boileau":

"Kickum for Crown declar'd, said in Romance
He had outdone the very wits of France:
Witness Pandion; and his Charles the Eight."¹⁶

The sources, however, in all likelihood were historical rather than fictitious. Among the references which Langbaine gives "for the Plot of this Play, as far as it concerns History," the Italian History of Guiccardini¹⁷ seems the most probable source of Crowne's information. Books One and Two give a very complete account of the expedition of Charles against Naples. All but one of the historical characters which Crowne utilizes are introduced by Guiccardini. In addition to Charles himself the following characters are historical: Alphonso and Ferdinand of Naples; the Prince of Salerne; Lewis, Duke of Orleans; Mompensier; Trivultio,² the Neapolitan general; Isabella, the widow of John Galeazzo, Duke of Milan; and Cornelia,¹⁸ the widow queen of Cyprus. These personages are all mentioned by name in Guiccardini except Cornelia. Philip de Commynes in his Memoirs¹⁹ gives an account of the expedition from a French point of view. His narrative, however, allows scant space to the actual investment of Naples and fails to mention Trivultio. On the other hand, Commynes' account may possibly have suggested to Crowne the idea of adding the history of the ill-fated Cyprian

¹⁶ *The Miscellaneous Works of His Grace George, Late Duke of Buckingham*, London, 1707, I, 60-61. Crowne dedicated his play to John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester. This fact led Langbaine (*English Dramatic Poets*, p. 92-3) when he made his remarks on the play, to write as follows: "This play notwithstanding the Patronage of his Lordship, could not escape his Railery; for in his Imitation of Boyleau's third Satyr he brings in Mr. Crown as follows:" He then quotes the passage given above as being taken from Rochester's poems. It may have appeared in the editions of 1680 and 1685, but it is not included in the 1696 edition of his works which is itself a re-issue of the edition of 1691, regarded as the one containing most of the authenticated pieces of Rochester. (I have not been able to see the editions of 1680, 1685, and 1691). Neither is it present in Jacob Tonson's edition of 1714. On the other hand, the poem appears in an edition of the works of the Duke of Buckingham in 1707, where it is specifically stated that it was written by that nobleman. The editors of the *Biographia Dramatica*, II, 92-3, repeat the substance of Langbaine's remarks, but add that the poem appears in Buckingham's works as by the Duke of Buckingham and the Earl of Rochester. They find also that in some collections of Rochester's poetry the poem is printed as wholly his under the title: "The Rehearsal, a Satire." The satire upon Crowne's play is not severe and is entirely merited, and Rochester was capable of treating thus a play dedicated to him. In spite of this fact, however, it seems to me more likely on the whole that "Timon" was the work of Buckingham.

¹⁷ *The History of Guiccardini*, translated by Geoffrey Fenton, London, 1618, Lib. 1-2, pp. 1-80.

¹⁸ Maidment and Logan (*Works*, I, 124) are mistaken in supposing Trivultio and Cornelia to be the invention of Crowne. For Trivultio, cf. Guiccardini, Lib. I, pp. 27, 52.

¹⁹ *The History of Comines*. Englished by Thomas Danett. Anno 1596. Tudor Translations. London, 1897. II, Book VII, chaps. 2, 4, 5, 10-13.

queen to that of Ferdinand. In an attempt to show that the Venetians had no right to the realm of Cyprus, Commynes prepared a pedigree of the Cyprian royal family in which "Katharine, daughter of Marke Comaire, Senator of Venice," and James her husband are listed.²⁰

There is no doubt that the Cornelia of the play is drawn from the life and history of Caterina Cornaro, a beautiful and gentle Venetian lady who became the queen of James II of Cyprus in 1468. Before her departure for Cyprus she was given a dowry of one hundred thousand ducats and adopted as "a daughter of the Venetian Republic". Her husband died in 1473, and her child in 1474. From that time until Venice forced her to abdicate in 1489, her life was full of care. Historically her only connection with Naples was a plot to marry her to Alphonso (the father of Ferdinand in Crowne's play).²¹ That Crowne was acquainted with the details of Caterina's life from some source is evident from the bits of history which he puts into the mouth of Cornelia.²² She says to Julia in speaking of her recall to Venice,

"But I must yield to my imperious fate,
For my kind fathers, the Venetian State,
Do at their wills dispose my Crown and me."²³

In another place in addressing Ferdinand, she refers to her dead husband:

"Yet as a widow Queen, that lately paid
Her solemn sorrow to the royal shade
Of her dead lord, I surely must reprove
All new addresses of a second love."²⁴

In reality, James II of Cyprus died in 1473 and Caterina abdicated perforce in 1489, while the expedition against Naples occurred in 1494 and 1495. Still further details of Caterina's history are revealed by Cornelia when she asks Ferdinand:

"But how can she support another's throne
Who is dispos'd and banisht from her own?"

²⁰ *The History of Comines*. II, 378.

²¹ For a good account of Caterina, cf. Horatio Brown, *Studies in Venetian History*, London, 1907, I, 255-92.

²² An interesting romance devoted to the life of Caterina Comaro has recently been published by Mrs. Lawrence Turnbull, entitled *The Royal Pawn of Venice*. It is true in general to the historical accounts of its heroine. A great deal is made of the intrigues of Rizzo to get the Cyprian succession into the hands of Prince Alphonso of Naples. Incidentally a romance is developed around Alnesi Bernadini, Caterina's Venetian adviser and Dama Margherita, a Cyprian maid of honor. I am indebted to Professor Kittredge for the suggestion of this reference.

²³ *Works*, I, 151.

²⁴ *Works*, I, 174.

A distrest Queen, who since the old King died,
 Have been too much opprest on every side.
 The Egyptian Sultans threatening every hour
 T'invade my kingdom with their mighty power,
 And none to guard me from this threat'ned fate
 But my good fathers, the Venetian State,
 Who wisely did adopt me in design
 My falling crown t'intice me to resign.
 Thither I go, forced by a fate so rude
 To spend my days in pious solitude."²⁴

Although Crowne makes Cornelia happy by uniting her to Ferdinand, as a matter of history Caterina was given the castle of Asolo,²⁵ where she ruled over her little estate in true queenly fashion. The dramatist was probably not choosing idly when he made Cornelia the name of his queen. Caterina Cornaro's family claimed that the blood of the Roman Cornelii ran in their veins,²⁶ and Caterina was welcomed to Asolo by the poets as Cornelia.²⁷

Crowne's handling of history in connection with the Queen of Cyprus is typical of his treatment of it as regards the expedition of Charles VIII. He portrays Charles as a generous, chivalrous leader who is chiefly concerned with love and honor. Guiccardini, on the contrary, describes him as unsound of body, deformed, weak-minded, with an inclination to glory, but rash in his actions.²⁸ Crowne provides him with a love affair with Isabella, wife of the ill-fated John Galeazzo, Duke of Milan; and marries him eventually to her sister Julia, a fictitious personage. Historically Charles VIII married Anne of Brittany before he went on his Italian expedition,²⁹ while his relations with Isabella were confined to a visit to Milan in 1494, when that Duchess pleaded in vain with him to have pity on her father and brother.³⁰ The dramatist's treatment of Ferdinand is very similar. In the play he is a heroic figure who challenges Charles to single combat; and later, fighting valiantly against the rebels, subdues the fiery Prince of Salerne. In the end he is generously allowed to rule in Naples and marries Cornelia. Historically, however, Ferdinand counselled the people of Naples to submit to the

²⁵ Asolo, it may be noted, was for a time the residence of Robert Browning. Browning has of course introduced "Kate the Queen" into *Pippa Passes*.

²⁶ Horatio Brown, *op. cit.*, I, 262.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 286.

²⁸ Guiccardini, *op. cit.*, Lib. I, p. 33.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Lib. I, p. 19.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37; Comines, Book VII, ch. 6, II, 191.

French, and fled to Ischia.⁸¹ Later, after Charles had left the city, he won it back and married Jane, his aunt.⁸²

The characters of the play which may be regarded as creations of the author are Gonsalvo, Cornelia's admiral; Irene, her confidante; Julia,⁸³ the sister to Ferdinand and Isabella; and Ascanio, the friend of Ferdinand. The name "Ascanio" was perhaps suggested to Crowne by a Cardinal Ascanius or Ascaigne, mentioned by both Guiccardini and Communes.

As a piece of dramatic composition *Charles VIII* shows an advance over *Juliana*, Crowne's first play. The exposition is handled with greater skill and the action develops more evenly. The play has all the characteristic defects of heroic drama such as exaggerated ideas of honor on the part of its heroes, and the subordination of everything to love, but it has none of those redeeming touches of real poetry which Dryden was able to give to his heroic plays. Thus early Crowne clearly establishes the dead level of his heroic verse.

ANDROMACHE

The next dramatic publication which is associated with the name of John Crowne is the tragedy of *Andromache*, translated from the French of Jean Racine. The title-page of the only edition bears the date 1675, but does not name the author. There is an epistle to the reader, however, which is signed with Crowne's initials, "J. C.," and which explains the occasion for the translation and our author's connection with it. Inasmuch as this play exists only in the original quarto and reveals the current English attitude towards French tragedy, it may be convenient to have it before us in its entirety. It is as follows:

"This Play was Translated by a young Gentleman, who has a great esteem of all French Playes, and particularly of this; and thinking it a pity the Town should lose so excellent a Divertisement for want of a Translation, bestow'd his pains upon it; and it happening to be in my hands in the long Vacation, a time when the Play-houses are willing to catch at any Reed to save themselves from Sinking, to do the House a kindness, and serve the Gentleman, who it seem'd, was desirous to see it on the Stage, I willingly perused it, but found neither

⁸¹ Guiccardini, pp. 53-4.

⁸² Guiccardini, p. 87.

⁸³ According to Communes, II, 383, Alphonso of Arragon had only two children, Ferdinand and Isabella.

the Play to answer the Gentlemans Commendation, nor his Genius in Verse very fortunate, and yet neither of 'em so contemptible as to be wholly slighted; but neither the Gentleman nor my self, having leisure enough to make those Emendations, which both the Play and the Verse needed; I begged leave of him to turn it into Prose; which I obtained and so it is in the condition you see. If the Play be barren of Fancy, you must blame the Original Author. I am as much inclined to be civil to Strangers as any Man; but then, they must be Strangers of Merit. I would no more be at the pains to bestow Wit (if I had any) on a French Play, then I would be at the Cost to bestow Cloaths on every shabby French-Man that comes over; for neither of 'em would have qualities to deserve my Charity. Yet that I prejudice not the Book-Seller, I will do him and the Play this right to say, that this of French Playes, is far from being the worst. It is much esteemed in France, and here too, by some English who are admirers of the French Wit, and think this suffered much in the Translation, I cannot tell in what, except in not bestowing Verse upon it, which I thought it did not deserve; for otherwise there is all that is in the French Play *verbatim*, and something more, as may be seen in the last Act, where what is only dully recited in the French Play, is there represented; which is no small advantage: but to let these Gentlemen, whoever they are, enjoy the felicity of their opinions, I will make bold to affirm, the Play deserved a better liking then it found; and had it been Acted in the good well meaning times, when the *Cid Heraclius*, and other French Playes met such applause, this would have passed very well; but since our Audiencies have tasted so plentifully the firm English Wit, these thin Regalio's will not down. This I thought good to say, both for the play, and also in my own behalf, to clear my self of the scandal of this poor Translation, where-with I was slandered, in spite of all that I could say in private in spite of what the Prologue and Epilogue affirmed on the Stage in publick which I wrote in the Translators name, that if the Play met with any success, he might wholly take to himself a Reputation, of which I was not in the least ambitious."

According to the *Term Catalogue*,⁸⁴ *Andromache* was published in Hilary term, 1674-75; that is between November 24, 1674 and February 15, 1675. The epistle to the reader states, however, that the play was placed in Crowne's hands in "the long Vacation, a time when the Play-houses are willing to catch at any Reed." The indications are, therefore, that the play was acted during the long vacation preceding its publication. This date is confirmed by the Epilogue which, after comparing the theatre to a country gentle-

⁸⁴ Arber, *Term Catalogue*, I, 197.

man who entertains lavishly at Christmas time but sparingly at other seasons, continues

"At such fond charge this House has been of late,
But Friends all gone, must now their charge abate,
And though to treat a Friend they'll not deny
Yet must to you who come but by the by
Serve up cold Meats, for such Translations are . . ."

These lines are a reference to the curtailment of expenses during the summer season, when most of the theatre-goers were absent from London. Hence we may fix upon the summer of 1674 as the date of the production of *Andromache*.

The drama is a reasonably literal but bald and uneven translation of the French play, with the exception of the final scene, which is a rearrangement of the last three scenes of Racine to suit the English fashion in tragedy. The alterations in the first four acts are of a very minor nature. In Act I the long speeches of Orestes are broken up into shorter ones. In Act II Orestes' soliloquy is abridged by half.⁸⁵ In the third act two speeches by Andromaque and Pyrrhus from scene six of Racine are omitted.⁸⁶ The changes in the last act, however, deserve greater consideration. The first two scenes of the French play are translated. In them Hermione wavers in her desire for the death of Pyrrhus at the hands of Orestes, but is very eager for it when she learns from Cléone that Pyrrhus and Andromaque are married, and that the former thinks only of his bride. From this point Racine makes his characters narrate the tragedy in the last three scenes as follows:—Orestes returns to Hermione and relates how the Greeks rushed upon Pyrrhus and killed him. Thereupon, instead of rewarding him with her love, Hermione upbraids him for executing a wish which she had breathed in a moment of distraction, and bids him begone. Orestes in a dazed condition wonders if the things which have happened are real. His friend Pylades pleads with him to depart ere the Epireans overcome them, and tells how Hermione went to the place where Pyrrhus lay dead and stabbed herself. At this news Orestes goes mad and rages. He is removed from danger by Pylades and the soldiers. The English version alters these scenes so as to make a dramatic spectacle of the tragedy, as follows: Orestes and the Greeks enter the temple and scatter themselves about as Pyrrhus and Andromache approach attended in solemn

⁸⁵ *Andromache*, London, 1675, p. 15.—*Andromaque* in the *Oeuvres Complètes de J. Racine* par L. Aimé-Martin, Paris, 1825, I, 502-3.

⁸⁶ *Andromaque*, III, 6, p. 525.

procession. There is a marriage song and chorus, after which Pyrrhus crowns his bride. The enraged Greeks surround and kill him, and drag his body from the temple. As Orestes is departing, he meets Hermione with a naked poniard in her hand, and relating how the deed was done, he bids her fly with him. She turns against him, however, accuses him of being an assassin who should not have heeded her distracted pleas, and departs with Andromache. Orestes is dazed for a moment, but when Pylades comes urging him to fly, he insists on following Hermione. At this point the bodies of Pyrrhus and Hermione are brought in, and a Greek relates how she killed herself. Orestes goes mad, but is rescued by the Greeks from the pursuit of Phoenix, and the Guards. Cephise reports the safe departure of the Greek fleet to Andromache, who wonders at the manner in which the gods have avenged her. In spite of the considerable change which is here indicated, the additions are slight, since the lines of Racine are shifted to fit with the new situation.³⁷

The most noteworthy matter connected with the English *Andromache* is the curious state in which the text is preserved. From the introductory epistle, one is led to expect a prose play, but this is not entirely the case. Almost at the beginning of Act IV³⁸ the straight prose dialogue gives way to a bastard mixture of prose and heroic couplets, sometimes in the same speech.³⁹ This in turn is discarded in favor of continuous couplets, with now and then a few lines of blank verse. A satisfactory explanation of this unusual mixture of prose and couplets in the same play is not easy to find, but it may be that the couplet scenes represent those parts of the work of the "young Gentleman" which were not "so contemptible as to be wholly slighted." One might suggest, also, that the summer company demanded the play for production before Crowne had completed his prose rendering.

Some doubt has been thrown on Crowne's epistolary explanation of his share in the translation by Miss Dorothea Canfield [Mrs. Dorothy Canfield Fisher], who implies that he fabricated his disclaimer of authorship in order to save his face after the work had been coldly received.⁴⁰ It is true that Crowne's prefatory word is

³⁷ In detail the speech of Pyrrhus (*Andromache*, 41) translates the words quoted by Orestes (*Andromaque*, 567). Orestes' speech (*Andromache*, 43) continues this same speech (*Andromaque*, 568), and so the third and fourth scenes are translated as they are in Racine. The last lines of 'a Greek's' speech (*Andromache*, 46) are from Pylades' speech (*Andromaque*, 574). The remarks of Andromache and Cephise at the end (*Andromache*, 48) are English additions.

³⁸ *Andromache*, 27.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 27-30.

⁴⁰ Dorothea Canfield, *Corneille and Racine in England*, p. 88-92.

not always to be trusted implicitly, but in this instance there is no reason to doubt his statement until evidence to the contrary is forthcoming. One can agree with Miss Canfield, however, that "the translation is an astonishingly bad one. Racine's melodious and flowing lines are rendered in the baldest and barest of prose translations, quite without grace of any sort."⁴¹ Such too, is the opinion of Genest⁴² and Beljame,⁴³ and more recently still of Charlanne.⁴⁴

CALISTO

Under date of December 15, 1674, John Evelyn has the following entry in his diary: "Saw a comedie at night at Court, acted by the ladies onely, amongst them Lady Mary and Ann, his Royal Highnesses two daughters, and my dear friend Mrs. Blagg. . ." On December 22nd he was at a "repetition of the Pastoral."⁴⁵ Evelyn's references to a "comedie" and "Pastoral" are to Crowne's masque of *Calisto: or The Chaste Nymph*, performed at court between twenty and thirty times⁴⁶ from December 8, 1674 until January 12, 1675.⁴⁷ On September 22, 1674 Margaret Blagge wrote to her friend Evelyn that "the play goes on mightily, which I hoped would never have proceeded farther."⁴⁸ This evidence is in accord with the statement of Crowne that, although he finished his part in the time allotted to him, scarcely a month, the first performance did not take place until several months after the date originally set, owing to the time required in perfecting the musical and dancing parts.⁴⁹ The date of composition may be placed, therefore, with some degree of assurance, in the summer of 1674. Its present form, says the author, was "finished and learnt between the second and third representation," that is in December 1674.⁵⁰ It was published in Michaelmas term 1675 in quarto form. The Prologue had been printed separately several months earlier.⁵¹

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

⁴² Genest, I, 178.

⁴³ Alexander Beljame, *Le Public et les Hommes de Lettres en Angleterre au Dis-*

⁴⁴ Charlanne, *L'Influence française en Angleterre au XVIIe Siècle*, Paris, 1906 p. 141.

⁴⁵ *The Diary of John Evelyn*, edited by H. B. Wheatley, London 1906, II, 305.

⁴⁶ *Works*, I, 238.

⁴⁷ *Notes and Queries*, 2nd Series, VI, 517. "An Accompt of such things as wer delivered to Mr. Cabbins for his Maties Great Ball from the 8th of December, 1674 till the 12th of Jany. next Enshewing."

⁴⁸ John Evelyn, *The Life of Mrs. Godolphin*, New York, 1847, p. 52.

⁴⁹ *Works*, I, 236-7.

⁵⁰ *Works*, I, 238.

⁵¹ Arber, *Term Catalogue*, I, 211, 218.

The reason for the choice of Crowne as the writer of the masque reveals an interesting chapter in the literary history of the Restoration. About 1670 the earl of Rochester was showing many attentions to Dryden, who in turn flattered him extravagantly in the dedication of his *Marriage à la Mode* (1673). In 1671 or 1672 a quarrel developed between Rochester and John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, over an insulting remark which the former was alleged to have made concerning the latter. Mulgrave challenged Rochester to a duel on horseback. He accepted, and accompanied by an unknown second, met Mulgrave. Col. Aston, Mulgrave's second, objected to the unknown second, and to Rochester's superb mounting, since his principal was riding a small hack. Rochester yielded and dismounted, but astonished his opponent by remarking that he was really too ill to fight. As a result no duel took place, but to satisfy the curiosity of the Londoners, Mulgrave felt obliged to state the reason, and Rochester lost his reputation for courage.⁵²

Meanwhile Mulgrave became Dryden's patron, probably towards the end of 1673; and friendly relations between Rochester and Dryden ceased. From that time until his death Rochester was a persistent enemy of the great poet. Until recently it has been held by most scholars⁵³ that Rochester, by way of retaliation upon Mulgrave, began to encourage Dryden's literary rivals by espousing the cause of Elkanah Settle, whose play, *The Empress of Morocco*, was performed at Whitehall. It is undoubtedly true that Rochester favored the production of Settle's play at court, but Mr. F. C. Brown has shown that *The Empress of Morocco* was produced not later than 1670.⁵⁴ Inasmuch as Rochester's quarrel with Mulgrave and the latter's patronage of Dryden are of a later year, it is very unlikely that Wilmot had in mind the possible humiliation of Dryden when he advanced Settle.⁵⁵

Settle basked in the light of public favor for several years, but at length Rochester grew weary of him, and in the summer of 1674 recommended Crowne to the king to write the masque of *Calisto*. As Malone well says, "By the recommendation of Crowne Rochester's malice was doubly gratified; for besides mortifying Settle, a

⁵² [Thomas Longueville], *Rochester and Other Literary Rakes of the Court of Charles II*, London, 1903, pp. 208-16.

⁵³ Edmund Malone, *The Critical and Miscellaneous Prose Works of John Dryden*, London, 1800, I, Part I, 124; Sidney Lee on Rochester in the *Dict. of Nat. Biog.* XXI, 536; Scott and Saintsbury, *The . . . Works of John Dryden*, I, 153 ff.

⁵⁴ F. C. Brown, *Elkanah Settle*, Chicago, 1910, p. 52-3.

⁵⁵ For the literary quarrel which grew out of *The Empress of Morocco* see Chapter I, *supra*, p. 32 ff.

marked slight was shown to Dryden, whose office as Poet Laureate it peculiarly was to compose such entertainments for the court."⁵⁶ That Crowne was aware of his being thrust into Dryden's place is evident when he apologizes to the reader for the pooriness of the piece. He says, "Had it been written by him, to whom, by the double right of place and merit, the honour of the employment belonged, the pleasure had been in all kinds complete."⁵⁷

The editors of the *Biographia Dramatica* state that *Calisto* was written at the command of James II's Queen when she was duchess of York.⁵⁸ On this point, however, they would have done well to follow their chief source more closely. Langbaine,⁵⁹ writing in 1691, says the masque was written "at the Command of her present Majesty"; i. e. Queen Mary, when she was a princess. Moreover, Crowne dedicated the masque to Princess Mary and referred to his task as "the glory of serving your Highness."⁶⁰ The two princesses, Mary and Anne, were very young in 1675, being respectively thirteen and eleven years old;⁶¹ but they never forgot the pleasure which Crowne helped to provide for them, and were kind to him in his old age.

The plot of *Calisto* may be summarized thus: Jupiter, in descending to earth to repair the damage done by Phaeton when he drove the chariot of the sun too near the earth, is enraptured by a nymph of chaste Diana's train, whom he has encountered in Arcadia. This nymph, the princess Calisto, and her sister Nyphe, are the favorite followers of Diana, who showers her praises upon them. Psecas, a proud and haughty nymph of the train, is jealous

⁵⁶ Malone, *The Prose Works of Dryden*, I, Part I, 134. John Dennis (*Original Letters*, I, 49) first pointed out Rochester's relation to *Calisto*. He wrote in his letter on Crowne's life; "Yet it was neither to the Favour of the Court, nor of Wilmot Lord Rochester, one of the Shining Ornaments of it, That he was indebted for the Nomination which the King made of him for the writing of the Mask of Calypso [sic], but to the Malice of that noble Lord, who design'd by that Preference to mortify Mr. Dryden." Colley Cibber in his *Apology* (edited by R. W. Lowe, London, 1889, II, 209-10) writes: "After the Restoration of Charles II. some faint Attempts were made to revive these Theatrical spectacles at court; but I have met with no account of above one Masque acted there by the Nobility, which was that of *Calisto* . . . For what Reason Crown was chosen to that Honour rather than Dryden, who was then Poet-Laureat and out of all comparison his Superior in Poetry may seem surprizing: But if we consider the Offense which the Duke of Buckingham took at the Character of Zimri in Dryden's *Absalom* &c. (which might probably be a Return to his Grace's Drawcansir in the *Rehearsal*) we may suppose the Prejudice and Recommendation of so illustrious a Pretender to Poetry might prevail at Court to give Crown this Preference." Lowe adds the following note: "*Calisto* was published in 1675. Genest (I, 181) says: 'Cibber, with his usual accuracy as to dates supposes that Crowne was selected to write a mask for the court in preference to Dryden, through the influence of the Duke of Buckingham, who was offended at what Dryden had said of him in *Absalom* and *Achitophel*—Dryden's poem was not written until 1681—Lord Rochester was the person who recommended Crowne.'"

⁵⁷ *Works*, I, 239.

⁵⁸ *Biographia Dramatica*, II, 77.

⁵⁹ Langbaine, 92.

⁶⁰ *Works*, I, 232.

⁶¹ *Works*, I, 222.

of Calisto, and is beloved by Mercury, but treats him scornfully. Mercury, finding Jupiter in the Arcadian fields, is at once jealous, and fears that Jove's presence is due to amorous inclinations towards Psecas. He is soon convinced that his jealousy is unfounded, and approves of Jove's scheme to woo the chaste Calisto in the form of Diana. This Jove attempts, but is rebuffed by the nymph, who threatens to kill herself. After the failure of this stratagem, Jupiter attempts to dazzle Calisto in his own form and offers her his throne, but all in vain. Angrily he bids the winds carry her off.

Meanwhile Psecas becomes more gracious towards Mercury and learns from him of Jove's effort to seduce Calisto. Nyphe unfortunately discovers Psecas and Mercury together, and threatens to reveal the nymph's shame. The fleet-footed god charms Nyphe to a grove and promises Psecas to interest Juno in her revenge on Calisto. Juno, however, has scented trouble herself, and coming to earth finds Jove with Calisto. Jove confesses his love for the nymph, but swears that she is chaste and that he admires her most for her virtue. Juno threatens revenge, and Jupiter bids airy spirits seize and confine her. Thus he forces her to embrace Calisto. Mercury, to please Psecas, charms Calisto and Nyphe so that they are prisoners in a grove, and hastens to heaven to arouse Juno.

Upon his return, Mercury promises Psecas her revenge, and she gives him a favor to wear. The imprisoned Calisto and Nyphe frantically wander about, suspicious of everything. Diana refuses to credit Psecas' scandalous charge against Calisto and bids the nymphs confine her. Juno interposes and supports Psecas. The apparent truth of the charge is revealed when Calisto and Nyphe defend themselves against Diana, thinking her Jove in disguise again. Calisto wounds Diana and then realizes her mistake. Through a trick of Mercury, Nyphe is charged with an amour with that god by Psecas. In the face of such evidence, Calisto is condemned to death by the weeping Diana, and Psecas promises Mercury her favors as a reward for his trickery. Moreover, Juno threatens to overthrow Diana and make Psecas goddess of the woods.

Elated by Juno's promises, Psecas now scorns to fulfill her obligations to Mercury. In anger he exposes her before Diana and Juno, explaining the whole deception and his part in it. Calisto and Nyphe are restored to favor, and a threatened conflict between Diana's nymphs and Juno's spirits is averted only by the arrival

of Jupiter at the summons of Mercury. He affirms the innocence of Calisto, and Nyphe pardons Mercury. Psecas confesses her jealous motive, but is received by Juno as her friend. Jupiter rewards Calisto and Nyphe by giving them the joint dominion of a star.

The masque is preceded by an elaborate prologue of allegorical figures, and each act is followed by a little pastoral portraying the loves of Daphne and Sylvia with Strephon and Corydon.

As Langbaine was perhaps the first to point out,⁶² *Calisto* is founded on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Lib. II, fables 5 and 6.⁶³ Briefly stated, Ovid's story is as follows: As a result of the terrible disaster which has befallen the world through the folly of Phaëton, Jupiter goes to restore Arcadia; and there sees Calisto, daughter of King Lycaon, who is a nymph of Diana and best beloved by her. She lies down in the heat of the day in a grove, and is there visited by Jupiter in the form and dress of Diana. He embraces her passionately and does not reveal himself without violating her virginity. She resists but to no avail. Later when Diana approaches her, she fears it is Jove, but is reassured by the presence of nymphs. In the course of time Diana discovers her condition while the nymphs are bathing one day, and she is ejected from the company. Juno, who is aware of Jupiter's fault, delays punishment of Calisto until her son Arcas is born. She then turns the mother into a bear. In this form she continues for fifteen years, until one day she meets her son Arcas hunting in the woods. He is about to pierce his mother with a spear when Jove interposes and turns them both into constellations. Juno is very angry but all in vain.

The choice of such a story for a dramatic performance at court, the parts of which were to be taken by young princesses and their friends, was unfortunate; but in this case the blame rests not altogether with the dramatist. Crowne says, "My subject . . . was not, I confess, imposed upon me by command, but it was for want of time to find a better: for I had but some few hours allowed

⁶² Langbaine, 92.

⁶³ The story of Calisto had been used before Crowne's time by at least one English dramatist. Thomas Heywood in *The Golden Age*, printed 1611, (*Collected Works of Thomas Heywood*, London, 1874, III, 1-79.) in his dramatization of the fall of Saturn and the rise of Jupiter gives over parts of Acts II and III to the Calisto incidents. Although Heywood is more faithful to Ovid than Crowne, he has altered some incidents which the latter left unchanged. In Heywood's play Jupiter first sees Calisto at the court of her father, King Lycaon. When Jove conquers the latter, the daughter is at his mercy; but she tricks him into granting her request, which is to join Diana's sisterhood. By another change Juno does not enter into the Calisto incidents in any way. The mother in human form is pursued by her son Archas and is rescued by Jove. Archas thereafter remains with his father. Cf. edition cited above, Acts II and III, pp. 23-37; 44-5; 55.

me to choose one."⁶⁴ It is evident, moreover, that he was aware of the difficulties before him; for he writes "I employed myself to draw one contrary from another; to write a clean, decent, and inoffensive play on the story of a rape, so that I was engaged in this dilemma, either wholly to deviate from my story . . . or by keeping to it, write what would be unfit for Princesses and Ladies to speak, and a court to hear."⁶⁴ Naturally Crowne chose the former method. He eliminated Arcas completely and made Jupiter unsuccessful in his attempts upon the chastity of Calisto. In order to give greater substance to the plot he added three characters: Nyphe, a sister of Calisto; Psecas, a proud and envious nymph, whose revengeful nature and vaulting ambition help materially to involve the action; and finally Mercury, who in his pursuit of the fickle Psecas, assists greatly in the entanglement, but who in the end serves as the resolving force.

In spite of this clever alteration of Ovid's story, the difficulties which Crowne had to face were considerable. He was limited in the number of speaking characters to seven, of which the rôles were all to be taken by ladies of the court. Of these only two were to appear in the guise of men. He experienced difficulty also with the prologue and songs, "the nature of which," he writes, "I was wholly a stranger to, having never seen anything of the kind."⁶⁵ The old-time court masques, which were so popular with the nobility in the reigns of James I and Charles I, had been swept away by the Puritan revolution; and with the establishment of the court drama at the Restoration, no serious effort was made to revive this form of entertainment. If we may believe the testimony of Colley Cibber, Crowne's *Calisto* was the only approach to this kind of theatrical spectacle in the Restoration period.⁶⁶ It is not surprising, therefore, that the young playwright experienced difficulty with those parts of the piece which were most characteristic of the masque genre.

The success of the piece was notable, there being from twenty to thirty performances of it in a period of less than two months; but its success depended much less upon literary merit than upon the spectacular staging, and upon the fact that the principal rôles were taken by members of the nobility. The two princesses, Mary and Anne, played Calisto and Nyphe; Lady Henrietta Wentworth

⁶⁴ *Works*, I, 237. Maidment and Logan are probably correct in supposing that the suggestion of the Calisto incidents came from Charles II himself. Cf. *Works*, I, 231.

⁶⁵ *Works*, I, 237.

⁶⁶ *An Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber*, op. cit., II, 209; Paul Reyher, *Les Masques Anglais*, Paris, 1909, p. 475.

took the part of Jupiter, and the Countess of Sussex, that of Juno; Lady Mary Mordant represented Psecas, while Mrs. Blagge,⁶⁷ a maid of honor to the queen, played the part of Diana, and Mrs. Jennings, who served in a similar capacity to the Duchess of York, that of Mercury.⁶⁸ Others of the noble young ladies served as nymphs of Diana's train, while among the men who danced was the Duke of Monmouth. In addition professional actors and actresses were called in to play the prologue and to sing the choruses between acts.⁶⁹

Some evidence as to the elaborateness and splendor of the costumes has come down to us. Margaret Blagge, the Mrs. Godolphin of Evelyn's memoir, wore apparel "amounting, besides the Pearles and Pretious Stones, to above three hundred pounds."⁷⁰ These pearls and precious stones Evelyn says in another place were worth nearly twenty thousand pounds.⁷¹ The two princesses and the other four ladies who had major parts were doubtless as expensively attired. As for the costumes of the host of persons who took part in the numerous entries provided by the piece, we are fortunate in having an itemized bill for habits made by John Allen and William Watts, tailors to Charles II.⁷² The document is entitled, "An acompt of such things as wer delivered to Mr. Cabbin for his Maties Great Ball from the 8th of December, 1674, till the 12 of Jany. next enshewing, as foll. viz. by Jon. Brown." Here follows an itemized list of materials used such as 'whealbon', canvas, 'weiar', searing 'candell', 'pasbord', and cotton 'riband'. This account is followed by a list of "Mascarading Habitts made by John Allen," and a similar list by William Watts. Here prices are listed for costumes for such performers as combatants, 'saityrs', 'windes', sea-gods, 'boyes in the cloudes', 'Aryell spritts', 'the genious of the cuntry', 'one cupitt', the 'Emperour of America', and many others. In another part of the document is given the quantity of material necessary to complete the costume of a shepherd, satyr, wind, or

⁶⁷ Evelyn (*The Life of Mrs. Godolphin*, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-55) has given an interesting account of Margaret Blagge, who played the part of Diana. She was more serious-minded than most of the members of Charles II's court at the time. When she was off-stage between entries, she did not mingle with the gallants as the other young ladies did, but "under pretence of conning her next part, was retired into a Corner, reading a booke of devotion, without att all concerning herselfe or mingling with the young company."

⁶⁸ For an account of the nobility who took part in *Calisto*, see Maidment and Logan, *Works*, I, 222, 228-31; 327-40.

⁶⁹ The actors and actresses so honored were Hart, Turner, Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Knight, Mrs. Butler, and Mrs. Hunt. Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Knight were both mistresses of the king.

⁷⁰ Evelyn, *The Life of Mrs. Godolphin*, p. 54.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁷² *Notes and Queries*, 2nd Series, VI, 517-20.

combatant. The habit of a combatant, for example, required a yard or more each of scarlet satin, green satin, silver tabby, gold tabby, and gold fringe. Many yards each of scarlet and silver galloon, and narrow and broad gold galloon were necessary. Dozens of 'jewells' of all sorts and silver and gold roses were also used. Finally the tailors summarized their bill as follows:

| | £ |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| "The whole of maskrads first bill | 440 |
| The segund bill | 030 |
| Payed Devoe | 030 |
| The sprigs of corall | 002—12-06 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 502—12-06" |

These items are naturally only a small part of the expense involved in producing *Calisto*. The total doubtless amounted to several thousand pounds.

The title-page of the original quarto of *Calisto*, 1675, styles it "the late masque at Court," and no doubt it was a masque which Crowne was engaged to write. If by masque, however, we mean the species of court entertainment which reached its point of highest literary and artistic development in the combined efforts of Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones at the courts of James I and Charles I, *Calisto* does not belong to the *genre*. John Evelyn in his diary calls it a 'comédie' on one occasion, and a 'pastoral' on the other.⁷³ The latter term seems to describe it more exactly than the word 'masque'. Reyher says that it resembles the pastorals played by Henriette-Marie. He calls it a "Masque without masquers."⁷⁴ Certainly the concluding parts of each act are pastoral in their nature.

The literary merits of *Calisto* are not great. Even the author was conscious of its faults and rated his talents very humbly in his dedication to the princess Mary. Yet in justice we must admit that he was compelled to write in haste. His skill is shown, not in the production of any memorable lines or passages, but in the cleverness with which he changed the Ovidian story to suit the needs and taste of his courtly audience. I agree with Miss Marks⁷⁵ that the prologue is "most extraordinary," but even that might well have been impressive with its costumes and music, and dancing.

In general, the critics have found little in *Calisto* to comment

⁷³ *Diary of John Evelyn*, op. cit., II, 305.

⁷⁴ P. Reyher, *Les Masques Anglais*, p. 476. Cf. also Jeannette Marks, *English Pastoral Drama*, London, 1908, p. 61; and Herbert A. Evans, *English Masques*, [1897] Introd. p. iv, note 2.

⁷⁵ J. Marks, op. cit., p. 61.

on. favorably. Genest objects to the length; but says the piece "does Crowne credit rather than otherwise."⁷⁶ Miss Marks finds the style "abstract, generalizing," and "containing many of the abstractions of eighteenth century poetry." For Reyher "la pièce est mortellement ennuyeuse."⁷⁷ Evelyn gives this contemporary opinion: "The Poem . . . however defective in other particulars, was exactly modest, and suitable to the Persons."⁷⁸

THE COUNTRY WIT

After the court success of *Calisto*, Crowne next turned his attention to prose comedy and wrote *The Country Wit*, which was produced at the Duke's Theatre in Dorset Garden probably very late in 1675, or early in 1676. Apparently it met with considerable success, for Crowne says in his dedication to the Earl of Middlesex that it "withstood the battery of a whole party, who did me the honour to profess themselves my enemies,"⁷⁹ and that it was honored by the favor of King Charles II.⁸⁰ Such approval was a valuable asset; for of Charles II Langbaine wrote shortly after his death, "The most judicious part of Mankind will readily acknowledge [him] to be a sovereign Judge of Wit."⁸¹ How often the piece was played in the last quarter of the seventeenth century we have no means of ascertaining, but between the years 1704 and 1727 it was acted at least ten times.⁸² According to Genest it was revived for the last time at Drury Lane on January 20, 1727, after a lapse of five years. It was then played "about three times."⁸³ It was originally published in a quarto bearing the date 1675.⁸⁴ A second edition appeared in 1693, and a third in 1735.

The plot of *The Country Wit* runs thus: After having virtually promised his daughter Christina in marriage to Ramble, Sir Thomas Rash announces to her that she is to marry Lady Faddle's nephew, Sir Mannerly Shallow, a country gentleman from Cumberland with two thousand pounds a year. Christina demurs and Isabella, her

⁷⁶ Genest, I, 182.

⁷⁷ Reyher, *op. cit.*, p. 476.

⁷⁸ Evelyn, *Life of Mrs. Godolphin*, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

⁷⁹ *Works*, III, 16.

⁸⁰ *Works*, III, 17.

⁸¹ Langbaine, 94.

⁸² For dates of revivals, see Genest, II, 305, 326, 394, 396, 404, 431, 579, 639; III, 51, 186.


⁸³ *Ibid.*, III, 186. Grosse, p. 19, misquotes Genest when he says the piece was last performed in 1720.

⁸⁴ According to Arber (*Term Catalogue*, I, 236) *The Country Wit* was published between February 10, 1676 and June 19, 1676.

maid, is insolent; but the irascible old man insists. He has a bond for one thousand pounds from Lady Faddle that her nephew will marry Christina on a certain date. Lady Faddle now announces the expected arrival of Sir Mannerly on the morrow. She also takes occasion to inform Christina that Ramble is a dissolute man-about-town who courts Betty Frisque, a wench kept by Lord Drybone. Christina does not believe her, but determines to spy on Ramble. She finds Ramble's fiddlers serenading Lady Faddle, apparently, and swears to forget her love.

Meanwhile Ramble serenades Betty Frisque at Lord Drybone's; and Sir Thomas, looking for Ramble, mistakes Drybone for him and thinks the former is trying to seduce Christina. Drybone, for his part, thinks that Sir Thomas has an intrigue with Betty. Ramble innocently becomes involved in the confusion and is accused by Sir Thomas. In the plot to prove Ramble's perfidy, Isabella disguised, entices him to visit her lady whose husband, she says, is away. Ramble reveals his amorous nature and is trapped by the ruse, only to be condemned by Christina. Sir Thomas, convinced that Christina was with Ramble in the dark, accuses her of being a "slut" and orders her out of the house. Ramble decides to reform, but when his man Merry comes with a plan for him to secure Betty Frisque by posing as a limner, he falls from grace. In lieu of Drawell, the limner, who writes Drybone of his inability to come, Ramble starts to sketch Betty's picture; and when Merry comes to distract Drybone, he pleads his cause. Drybone, in a fit of jealousy, is about to eject Ramble when Lady Faddle interposes. Later Betty goes to Ramble's lodgings, only to find two other women waiting for sittings. Betty has just concealed herself when Lady Faddle arrives and insists on a picture.

Meanwhile Sir Mannerly Shallow and his man Booby have arrived in London, and after many farcical blunders reach Lady Faddle's residence. Sir Thomas follows Lady Faddle to Ramble's lodging and there is about to arrest her for forfeiture of her bond when he learns of Sir Mannerly's arrival. Christina appears and forces Ramble to proclaim her innocence. She now consents to marry Sir Mannerly. While Ramble goes to seek out Mannerly and rid himself of his rival, Mannerly mistakes the porter, Thomas Rash, who has the same name as his master, Sir Thomas, for the knight and insists on marrying his daughter. The porter is honest, but his wife presses the match for her daughter Winnifred. Ramble



discovers Sir Mannerly and gives him the choice of being run through or of returning to Cumberland. Ramble makes no headway, however, in his affair with Christina, and seems likely to fail, when Drybone appears in pursuit of Betty and assists in clearing up the confusions of the previous evening. Drybone agrees to settle five hundred a year on Betty. Sir Thomas now espouses the cause of the penitent Ramble, and Christina accepts him. Sir Mannerly, meanwhile, has married Winnifred, and learns to his sorrow that she is a porter's daughter. He is forced to accept the situation. Sir Mannerly's man Booby is made the victim of a beggar-woman, who exchanges her bastard child for a bag of gold.

In this his first comedy Crowne gives many indications that he was following the popular vogue for prose comedy which by 1675 had received a considerable impetus from the work of Sir Robert Howard, Sir Charles Sedley, Sir George Etherege, and William Wycherley. Like Etherege and Wycherley, our author chose prose as his medium; like them also, but to a greater extent, he went to Molière for suggestions as to plot and characters. His smaller degree of originality prompted him to use the work of the great French comic poet with greater freedom than he was to be guilty of in his later comedies. Crowne's indebtedness to Molière in *The Countrey Wit* extends all the way from direct borrowing of plot and dialogue in one instance, to faint reminiscences of Molièresque characters.⁸⁵

The most obvious borrowing is one which Langbaine took particular delight in pointing out.⁸⁶ The sub-plot of *The Countrey Wit*, which involves Betty Frisque, Lord Drybone, Ramble, and Merry, is taken from Molière's *Le Sicilien, ou L'Amour Peintre*. The fiddlers whom Ramble employs to serenade Betty correspond to the musicians used by Hali to arouse Isidore.⁸⁷ The song sung to Betty may well have been suggested by the two songs in *Le Sicilien*.⁸⁸ Lord Drybone's entry upon the stage in a nightgown with a drawn sword imitates the entry of Dom Pèdre in night cap and dressing gown, and with a sword.⁸⁹ Drybone's remark "Who's there?" and Merry's reply, "A friend," accompanied by an exchange of ear-cuffing, translates Dom Pèdre's "Qui va là?" and Hali's reply,

⁸⁵ For accounts of Crowne's indebtedness to Molière in *The Countrey Wit*, see Grosse, 20-27; H. Van Laun in *Le Moliériste*, III, 58-9, 137; D. H. Miles. *The Influence of Molière on Restoration Comedy*, appendix, 227-8.

⁸⁶ Langbaine, 94.

⁸⁷ *The Countrey Wit*, Act II, *Le Sicilien*, sc. 2, 3.

⁸⁸ *The Countrey Wit*, Act II, p. 48-9, *Le Sicilien*, sc. 3, 8.

⁸⁹ *The Countrey Wit*, Act II, p. 50, *Le Sicilien*, sc. 4.

"Ami."⁹⁰ When beaten, Lord Drybone calls for assistance, naming several of his servants, as George, Peter, Thomas,—names which Dom Père used under a similar embarrassment. The device which Adraste uses to get into the presence of Isidore is the same which Merry suggests to Ramble for the conquest of Betty Frisque. Adraste uses a letter from his friend Damon the painter to hoodwink Dom Père; Ramble uses one from Drawell, which is in part almost a translation of Molière.⁹¹

"Gardez-vous bien surtout de lui parler d'aucune récompense; car c'est un homme qui s'en offense-rail, et qui ne fait les choses que pour la gloire et pour la réputation."

"Have a care I beseech your lordship not to speak to him of any recompense, for he is a gentleman of quality, and draws only for his own divertissement."

The dialogue which follows where Ramble recalls the story of Apelles is almost a word for word translation.⁹²

"J'ai lu, je ne sais où, qu' Apelle peignit autrefois une maîtresse d'Alexandre, et qu'il devint, la peignant, si éperdument amoureux, qu'il fut près d'en perdre la vie; de sorte qu' Alexandre, par. générosité, lui céda l'objet de ses vœux. Je pourrais faire ici ce qu' Apelle fit autrefois; mais vous ne feriez pas peut-être ce que fit Alexandre."

"I remember a story of Apelles: Apelles once drew the picture of a mistress of Alexander the Great; and, as he was painting her, fell so passionately in love with her that he was ready to die. Alexander out of pure generosity, bestowed her upon him. I could do as Apelles did; but my lord, I am afraid your lordship will not prove an Alexander the Great."

"J'ai toujours de coutume de parler quand je peins . . . pour réveiller l'esprit, et tenir les visages dans la gaieté nécessaire aux personnes que l'on veut peindre."

"My lord, on the contrary, I discourse out of regard to my pencil; to quicken the spirits, and put a briskness and gaiety in the face."⁹³

As Hali attracts Dom Père's attention in the guise of a Spaniard, so Merry in the habit of an attorney distracts Lord Drybone. Like Adraste, Ramble seizes the opportunity to press his suit, and like

⁹⁰ *The Country Wit*, Act II, p. 51, *Le Sicilien*, sc. 4.

⁹¹ *The Country Wit*, Act IV, p. 91, *Le Sicilien*, sc. 10.

⁹² *The Country Wit*, Act IV, p. 93, *Le Sicilien*, sc. 11.

⁹³ *The Country Wit*, Act IV, p. 93, *Le Sicilien*, sc. 11.

him he pretends to be explaining a mole when Drybone returns. Beyond these external features Crowne did not copy Molière. Lord Drybone is much more suspicious than Dom Pèdre. Throughout, Isidore, the slave, is a much higher type than Betty Frisque. Hali's ruse for distracting Dom Pèdre is more clever than Merry's to attract Drybone's attention. Finally Crowne makes no effort to use Molière's clever dénouement.

In addition to these obvious borrowings from *Le Sicilien*, there are other instances in which Crowne manifestly drew suggestions from Molière's plays. Grosse has pointed out that the hard-hearted father who sacrifices his daughter's choice in marriage to his own self-interest is a type which Molière used frequently.⁹⁴ Sir Thomas Rash belongs to this type; in fact, the main plot of *The Countrey Wit* turns on his insistence that Christina shall marry Sir Mannerly Shallow and his two thousand pound income, rather than Ramble to whom she had been promised. There is a similar situation in *Tartuffe*, where Orgon announces to his daughter Mariane that she must marry Tartuffe after he had promised her to Valère. The contention⁹⁵ that this situation provided Crowne with a suggestion for his main plot is supported by the fact that the scene in which the maid Isabella impertinently opposes Sir Thomas⁹⁶ is drawn from a similar scene in *Tartuffe* where the impertinent Dorine opposes Orgon's plan to join Mariane to Tartuffe.⁹⁷ Orgon's motive in disposing of his daughter, however, is not a sordid one, as in the case of Sir Thomas. In this respect Crowne's suggestion probably came from *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, where Oronte would marry his daughter to the Limoges lawyer, because the latter has an income of three or four thousand crowns.⁹⁸ There are other reasons for thinking that our author had this play in mind in writing *The Countrey Wit*. Both plays are excursions in low comedy, and both achieve some of their comic effects by the tricks which are played on de Pourceaugnac and Sir Mannerly. Furthermore these two characters are residents of country districts who are coming up to the city to marry girls they have never seen. On the other hand, contrary to Van Laun's suggestion,⁹⁹ it seems to me that Sir

⁹⁴ Grosse, p. 22, note 2. Orgon in *Tartuffe*, Harpagon in *L'Avare*, Argan in *Le Malade Imaginaire*, Oronte in *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, and Jourdain in *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* are examples of this type.

⁹⁵ Cf. Grosse, p. 23; and Miles, appendix, pp. 228-9.

⁹⁶ *The Countrey Wit*, Act I, p. 19 ff.

⁹⁷ *Tartuffe*, Act II, sc. 2.

⁹⁸ *M. de Pourceaugnac*, Act I, sc. 1.

⁹⁹ H. Van Laun, *Les Plagiarismes de Molière en Angleterre, Le Moliériste*, III, 59.

Mannerly Shallow is entirely English and owes next to nothing to M. de Pourceaugnac.

In another instance Grosse found a model in Molière's *George Dandin* for the scene in *The Countrey Wit* in which Ramble is tricked by Isabella into forcing his way to her mistress.¹⁰⁰ Isabella cleverly compels Ramble to repeat after her an apology for his intrusion and a statement of his desire. This, according to Grosse, is modelled on two scenes in *George Dandin* in which M. de Sotenville forces his son-in-law to repeat after him apologies to Clitandre and Angélique.¹⁰¹ The dramatic device is the same in Crowne and in Molière, but the purpose of it is entirely different. Dandin is being made to apologize humbly, while Ramble is merely carrying out a suggestion which will advance his desires. Grosse further notes the similarity between the confusion in the darkness, in *George Dandin* where Dandin is mistaken by Lubin for Claudine, and in *The Countrey Wit* where Lord Drybone and Sir Thomas Rash both mistake each other for Ramble.¹⁰² Such a use of darkness to cause mistaken identity is a common device of a playwright, however, and need not be attributed to Molière. It was frequently used in the Restoration period.

As has already been hinted, Crowne is also indebted to Molière for suggestion of characters. Isabella is clearly modelled upon Dorine in *Tartuffe*, with whom she shares an extreme impertinence. Like Dorine, Isabella is chiefly concerned lest her mistress be forced to marry contrary to her inclinations, and assists her to thwart the efforts of her father.¹⁰³ Lady Faddle likewise was doubtless suggested by the type of neglected marriage-mad aunt to be found in Molière in the characters of the Comtesse d'Escarbagnas and of Bèlise in *Les Femmes Savantes*. As Grosse has said, Lady Faddle has excessive sensibility and secret longing in common with the Comtesse d'Escarbagnas,¹⁰⁴ but she is thoroughly English, nevertheless.

Although Crowne was chiefly indebted to Molière for material and suggestions, English influences, I believe, were not entirely lacking. In two instances at least, he seems to have borrowed suggestions from recent comedies of Wycherley and Etherege. The gushing exchange of compliments between Sir Thomas Rash and

¹⁰⁰ *The Countrey Wit*, Act III, p. 60.

¹⁰¹ *George Dandin*, Act I, sc. 6, and Act III, sc. 7.

¹⁰² *The Countrey Wit*, Act II, pp. 49-51—*George Dandin*, Act II, sc. 3.

¹⁰³ Toinette in *Le Malade Imaginaire* is another maidservant of the Dorine type.

¹⁰⁴ Grosse, p. 26.

Lady Faddle in which each tries to outdo the other, would seem to owe its origin as a comic device to a similar exchange of sarcastic flattery between Alderman Gripe and Mrs. Joyner in Wycherley's *Love in a Wood* (1671).¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, Wycherley's Lady Flippant may well have been in Crowne's mind when he drew Lady Faddle. The former hypocritically inveighs against marriage, but all the while she has secret amorous longings for a husband. She pursues Dapperwit much as Lady Faddle pursues Ramble to his lodgings, where she insists on a picture.¹⁰⁸ Etherege's *She Would if She Could* (1668) seems to have suggested to Crowne the incident in which Isabella goes to Ramble's lodgings with Christina's knowledge to trap him into a disclosure of his falseness.¹⁰⁷ She says her mistress is a married lady whose husband is out of town, and who languishes for his presence. Isabella makes it clear that she has acquainted Ramble with this out of charity, since her mistress knows nothing of her visit. Ramble is to feign an excuse for gaining admittance. In Etherege's play *Sentry*, following Lady Cockwood's instructions, calls at Courtal's lodgings to procure a visit from him to her mistress. She pretends that she does it on her own account, and warns Courtal to have some excuse other than her visit to gain an entry.¹⁰⁸

When we consider the variety of sources to which Crowne must have gone for his material in *The Countrey Wit*, it becomes apparent that he has shown considerable skill in adapting his borrowings. As Grosse has said, this first comedy is a rare mixture of dependence and originality. Although Ramble plays the part of Adraste of *Le Sicilien* in the sub-plot, he is not drawn from him, but is an original character with Crowne, and without doubt a realistic figure from the time. Christina is also an independent creation. In moral purity she is rather exceptional among the heroines of Restoration comedy. Sir Mannerly Shallow, as we have seen, may be a faint reminiscence of Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, but on the other hand, he is thoroughly English and probably comes straight from characters of that day. In the case of Sir Mannerly and his man Booby, Crowne sacrificed accurate realism in portrayal for low comedy effects. Both are caricatures rather than characters. Lady Faddle likewise is overdrawn for comic effect. Lord Dry-

¹⁰⁶ *The Countrey Wit*, Act I, pp. 33-4—*Love in a Wood*, Act I, sc. 1. Mermaid ed. of Wycherley, pp. 15-16.

¹⁰⁸ *The Countrey Wit*, Act IV, p. 100—*Love in a Wood*, Act I, sc. 2, pp. 27-8; and Act III, sc. 4, pp. 76-7.

¹⁰⁷ *The Countrey Wit*, Act III, pp. 55-6.

¹⁰⁸ Etherege, *She Would if She Could*, Act I, sc. 1, Ed. Verity, p. 123.

bone and Betty Frisque owe their origin to Dom Pèdre and his Greek slave Isidore, but as characters they are completely made over. Drybone is a debauched old nobleman; and in opposition to Isidore, who is noble even though she is a slave, Betty Frisque is a gay adventuress who sells her wares to the highest bidder. Sir Thomas Rash may be indebted to Orgon and Oronte for his behavior towards Christina, but his character is his own. He has that wholesome dislike for the frivolity and licentiousness of London society which many an elderly man must have felt in 1675.

Portions of *The Countrey Wit* belong to the comedy of manners, —a type to which Etherege and Wycherley had just given its peculiar Restoration qualities,—but Crowne is right when in his dedication he classifies his play as low comedy, "because a great part of it consists of comedy almost sunk to farce." The technique of the play is characteristic of the comedy of the period. The exposition which follows the scene from Molière's *Tartuffe* is swift, but the action of the main plot develops slowly. Complication of the situation is achieved only by the use of an elaborate sub-plot, and in the end the main plot is resolved through the self-elimination of Sir Mannerly.

THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM, PART I.

The two parts of *The Destruction of Jerusalem* were published in the spring of 1677,¹⁰⁹ and in all probability they were being acted in January or February of that year. Up to this time all of Crowne's productions except *Calisto* had been given by Betterton at the Duke's Theatre. The new two-part play, however, was produced at the Theatre Royal with Kynaston and Hart in the rôles of Titus and Phraartes, and with Mrs. Boutell and Mrs. Marshall playing Clarona and Berenice.¹¹⁰ The reason for the change of theatre is found in a document first reprinted by Malone, which contains a protest by the King's men addressed, as Malone thinks, to the Lord Chamberlain, Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington in 1678. It recites an agreement between the King's company and Dryden whereby the latter, in return for a share and a quarter in the company, equal "communibus annis" to three or four hundred pounds, contracted to write three plays a year. Although Dryden produced scarcely a play a year, the company had not held him to

¹⁰⁹ *Arber, Term Catalogue*, I, 273.

¹¹⁰ *Roscius Anglicanus*, p. 13.

his agreement, and at his request had even given him a third day for his last new play, *All for Love*. "Yet notwithstanding this kind proceeding," continues the protest, "Mr. Dryden has now jointly with Mr. Lee (who was in pension with us to our last day of playing and shall continue) written a play called *Oedipus*, and given it to the Duke's company, contrary to his said agreement, his promise, and all gratitude, to the great prejudice and almost undoing of the company, they being the only poets remaining to us. Mr. Crowne, being under a like agreement with the Duke's House, writt a play called *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, and being forced by their refusal of it to bring it to us, the said Company compelled us after the studying of it, and a vast expense in scenes and cloathes, to buy off their clayme, by paying all the pension he had received from them; amounting to one hundred and twelve pounds paid by the King's Company, besides neere forty pounds he the said Mr. Crowne paid out of his own pocket."¹¹¹

From this petition it appears that the Duke's Company refused Crowne's two plays, and that he carried them to the King's Men and got them accepted. The reason underlying the refusal is to be found, in all likelihood, in the previous acceptance by the Duke's Company of Otway's adaptation of Racine's *Bérénice* and Molière's *Les Fourberies de Scapin*. It would not have been policy for one company to produce in the same season plays so similar in story as Otway's *Titus and Berenice* and the second part of *The Destruction of Jerusalem*. Otway's two adaptations were licensed for printing on February 19, 1676-77,¹¹² and were advertised in the *Term Catalogue* as having been published in Hilary term; i. e. between November 22, 1676 and February 12, 1677.¹¹³ Even Crowne himself in his epistle to the reader refers to "a gentleman having lately translated that play, [Racine's *Bérénice*] and exposed it to public view on the stage."¹¹⁴ It is likely, therefore, that Otway's adaptation somewhat antedated the appearance of *The Destruction of Jerusalem* on the stage, and that it was the cause of the refusal of Crowne's plays by the Duke's men.

The success of Crowne's two-part play was very remarkable, and is somewhat puzzling when we consider of what stuff and in what manner it was made. The author himself in his epistle to

¹¹¹ Malone, *The Prose Works of John Dryden*, I, pt. I, 73-75.

¹¹² See the title page of the first quarto of *Titus and Berenice*.

¹¹³ Arber, *Term Catalogue*, I, 267.

¹¹⁴ *Works*, II, 238.

the reader refers to the world as "having been kind to these plays".¹¹⁵ Furthermore in a letter prefixed to the edition of *The Works of the Earl of Rochester, Roscommon, and Dorset*, London, 1731, supposed to have been written by St. Evremond to the Duchess of Mazarin, there is a statement that "Mr. Crowne's 'Destruction of Jerusalem' . . . met with as wild and unaccountable success as Mr. Dryden's 'Conquest of Granada'."¹¹⁶ Besides the original edition of 1677, quartos of the play were published in 1693 and 1703.

The argument of the first part is as follows: Chafing under the oppression of Rome, the people of Jerusalem appeal to Queen Berenice, who claims the Jewish throne in succession to her slain brother Agrippa. There is passionate love between her and Titus Vespasian. Upon her approach to the city, the people nearly mob her, but she is rescued by Phraartes, the young exiled king of Parthea, who is in love with Clarona, daughter of Matthias, the high priest. Monobazus, slayer of Berenice's brother, assists at her rescue and is smitten by her charms. Within Jerusalem the Pharisees, under the leadership of Eleazar and John, are planning a revolt from Matthias with the aid of the Edomites. The rebels are defeated, however, through the bravery of Phraartes and Monobazus, who goes disguised and is styled 'The Unknown'. While Berenice tells her maid of the beginning of her love for Titus, Phraartes complains of Clarona's coldness, and Monobazus confesses that he slew Berenice's brother. To Phraartes' entreaties Clarona opposes her religious vow of chastity.

While Matthias and Phineas are keeping guard against the Edomites, they are amazed by strange portents in the heavens, such as the appearance of an aerial army, by a severe storm, by a prophet crying woe, and by an angel who prophesies the doom of Jerusalem. Phraartes and Monobazus witness these phenomena. The latter is astonished, but the former is skeptical of anything supernatural, and jests. A meeting of the Sanhedrim is called, and while the counsellors are in session, "from foggy clouds a sleepy unguent falls" upon them with soporific effects. Meanwhile John, Eleazar, and the Pharisees prepare to murder Matthias and his followers in holy zeal. The ghost of Herod gloats over the sleeping counsellors, and they awake from horrid dreams in time to flee from

¹¹⁵ *Works*, II, 235.

¹¹⁶ *Works*, II, 218. Maidment and Logan quote this passage. I have been unable to see the edition referred to.

their enemies. John falsely accuses Matthias of concealing Caesar's image in the city. The latter replies by branding his accuser as a traitor.

In the fight which follows Phraartes and Monobazus are awakened and rush out to battle. Berenice and Clarona are both frightened. The former wishes for Titus, while Clarona prays for Phraartes, thereby revealing to Berenice a lively interest in him. Matthias, fighting bravely to guard the temple, is captured by John and the Pharisees. They prepare to kill him when Phraartes comes to the rescue. Although Clarona previously had banished the Parthian king from her presence, she now meets with him when she seeks out her father. The latter wishes to reward Phraartes for his service, and the king desires Clarona. After a long debate between the lovers concerning heavenly devotion and earthly love, he is forced to take her without despoiling her virginity. The play ends with news of a Roman army moving against Jerusalem.

The action, as we have just seen, centers around the rebellion of the seditious Pharisees under John and Eleazar, and the civil war between them and the forces of the highpriests Matthias and Phineas. The source of this material is the *De Bello Judaico* of Josephus. The main historical incidents are drawn from Book IV, Chapters 3 to 5. John and Eleazar retain their names and chief characteristics from Josephus. In Matthias Crowne represents the high-priest Ananas, while Phineas corresponds only very roughly to the high-priest Jesus. A detailed comparison of the three chapters mentioned above with Crowne's play clearly establishes the relation between the two. In Act I the characterization of John and the Pharisees as a usurping zealot sect by Matthias, Sagan, and Phineas; the treacherous attitude of John; his lies to the zealots about Matthias; and his efforts to involve the Idumeans—all this is drawn from chapter 3.¹¹⁷ In Act I also, the announcement of the arrival of the Edomites, the shutting of the gates, and Matthias' direction to Sagan to harangue the Idumeans are taken from chapter 4.¹¹⁸ The determination of the Edomites to fight in spite of the appeal of Sagan, is found in the same chapter.¹¹⁹ At the end of Act II and at the beginning of Act III a violent

¹¹⁷ *The Destruction of Jerusalem, Part I, Act I, p. 250-54—De Judaico Bello, Lib. IV, cap. 3, §§1, 2, 7, 9, 12-14.* Hereafter in the footnotes immediately following I shall refer to the play only by page and to *De Bello Judaico* as *Bell. Jud.*

¹¹⁸ *Works, II, 254-5—Bell. Jud., Lib. IV, cap. 4, §§1, 3.*

¹¹⁹ *Works, II, 258-9—Bell. Jud., Lib. IV, cap. 4, §4.*

storm with its portents is discussed by the characters. Such a storm Josephus describes in Chapter 4.¹²⁰ When, in the violence of the storm, the Pharisees force the city gates and let in the Idumeans, Crowne follows a similar incident in the Jewish history.¹²¹ In Josephus, Ananas allows his guards to sleep because of the nature of the storm, but the dramatist employs a supernatural effect to put the Sanhedrim to sleep.¹²² Although Matthias is captured by the Pharisees in the last act, as Ananas was by the Idumeans, the playwright brings his hero Phraartes to the rescue and the catastrophe is delayed until Part II.¹²³

Crowne's indebtedness to Josephus is by no means limited to Book IV of *De Bello Judaico*. The airy army which appears in the sky coincident with the storm, and which is discussed with such wonder by the high-priests and Pharisees, is the elaboration of a suggestion in the fifth chapter of Book VI.¹²⁴ The waking prophet who cries woe to Jerusalem in Act III is Crowne's use of an incident in the same chapter in which a plebeian named Jesus cries, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem" for seven years. The prophet's words in the play approximate a translation of the words of Jesus, the husbandman, as a comparison will show. Jesus says: "A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, and a voice against the whole people."¹²⁵ Crowne's prophet says:

"From the four winds and the earth's hollow womb,
A voice, a voice—a dreadful voice is come;
A voice against our elders, priests and scribes,
Our city, temple, and our holy tribes;
Against the bridegroom and the joyful bride,
And all that in Jerusalem reside."¹²⁶

It is likely that the characters of Monobazus and Phraartes were suggested to Crowne by the *Antiquitates Judaicae* of Josephus. The former is described by the playwright in his dramatis personae as "brother to the king of Adiabene." His history is related in Book XX of the *Antiquitates*. There are a few points of

¹²⁰ *Works*, II, 268-72; 275-77—*Bell. Jud.*, Lib. IV, cap. 4, §§.

¹²¹ *Works*, II, 282-87—*Bell. Jud.*, Lib. IV, cap. 4, §§6, 7.

¹²² *Works*, II, 287-90—*Bell. Jud.*, Lib. IV, cap. 4, §§6, 7.

¹²³ *Works*, II, 299—*Bell. Jud.*, Lib. IV, cap. 5, §2.

¹²⁴ *Works*, II, 268-72; 275-77—*Bell. Jud.*, Lib. VI, cap. 5, §3.

¹²⁵ *Bell. Jud.*, Lib. VI, cap. 5, §3. The passage is quoted from William Whiston translation of *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, Oxford, 1839, IV, 267.

¹²⁶ *Works*, II, 271.

THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM. PART II

The two parts of *The Destruction of Jerusalem* were doubtless performed on successive afternoons. The conclusion of Part I is indecisive, and probably it was intended to attract the curious to the performance of the second part. The "wild and unaccountable success" which the plays achieved must have been due in large measure to the more theatrical effects and the more sensational scenic devices of Part II. On July 1, 1712, the second part was revived by the summer company at Drury Lane. The play bill states that it had not been acted for fifteen years.¹⁸⁵

The plot of this part may be stated thus: The Roman army is before Jerusalem under the command of Titus, who in a struggle between glory and love for Queen Berenice, has delayed to attack for three months. His generals and soldiers are growing clamorous for action. Tiberias urges him to give up the queen and he reluctantly consents; but in the presence of her charms he cannot dismiss her, and sorrowfully departs. Meanwhile in Jerusalem Matthias and Phineas are troubled by approaching starvation and pestilence, and the machinations of the rebellious Pharisees under Eleazar and John. The latter, at the suggestion of his followers, usurps the high-priest's mitre with pretended reluctance. Phraartes in despair of winning Clarona, has been idle, but now she confesses her love for him, and he goes with new zeal to the fight. Berenice is much disturbed by Titus's silent dismissal, and upon his return from a victorious assault upbraids him for unkindness. He protests his love but again departs in sorrow. Meanwhile, John in pontifical vestments seizes Matthias and accuses him of conspiring with Rome. Again Phraartes comes to the rescue of the latter. Later the Parthian king finds Clarona weeping over a book and enters into an argument with her about a future life. They are interrupted by Parthian leaders, who tell Phraartes of the restoration of his crown and of the demand of the army for his presence. He is thus forced to leave Clarona behind in Queen Marianne's tower.

The departure of Phraartes gives the Romans new courage, and Tiberias again urges Titus to forsake Berenice. Titus has not courage to face her, but Tiberias consents to give her the message. The unfortunate queen is pursued by other suitors. Monobazus, who forsook Phraartes to defend Titus, now discloses

¹⁸⁵ Genest, II, 499.

his passion, and the kings Malchus and Antiochus visit her with similar intentions. The share of Monobazus in King Agrippa's death is revealed, and Berenice condemns him. When Tiberias announces the determination of Titus to part with her, she will not believe it; and the general tells her she may have it from her lover's own lips. The interview ensues. Titus explains the Roman law against foreign queens and emphasizes the demands of glory. She for her part upbraids him and swears to die. In Jerusalem the situation grows worse. Emboldened by the absence of Phraartes, John, Eleazar and the Pharisees surprise Matthias and his counsellors and kill them. Clarona is wounded in the struggle. Phraartes, who has been rejoined by Monobazus, returns to Jerusalem and finds Clarona mortally wounded. She dies in his embrace. After a fit of madness, he plunges into the fighting with infuriated vigor. The temple is fired by the Pharisees. Titus goes to oppose the mighty feats of Phraartes and conquers only when a tower of the temple falls on the latter. Titus and Berenice meet once again. He persuades her to forgo death, but is firm in his dismissal. Once she is gone, however, he curses the fate which parted him from his love.

As in Part I, Crowne is indebted to Josephus for his material concerning the siege and destruction of Jerusalem.¹⁸⁶ In the *De Bello Judaico* this account occupies Books V and VI. From them the playwright utilized the frequent descriptions of famine, pestilence, and horror in the city. In Act II a Pharisee is shown snatching bread from a poor woman. This incident is probably based on chapter 10 of Book V.¹⁸⁷ In the same act, the desire of Eleazar to get free from the leadership of John and to assume the mitre himself is an echo of his revolt in chapter 1 of the same book.¹⁸⁸ The final slaughter of Phineas, Sagan, and Matthias in the last act may go back to the murder of Ananas and Jesus by the Idumeans; or it may be a reflection of the death of Matthias, a

¹⁸⁶ According to R. B. McKerrow (*Gull's Horn Book* by Thomas Dekker, London, 1904, introd. p. ii) "the fall of Jerusalem was a favourite subject with Elizabethan writers and moralists." There were at least two plays on the subject. W. W. Greg in his edition of *Henslow's Diary*, II, 155, lists a play called 'Jerusalem' by Thomas Legge which dates from ca. 1577. It was played by Strange's men in the spring of 1591-92. J. O. Halliwell-Phillips in his *Illustrations of the Life of Shakespeare*, Part first, London, 1874, p. 56, records a pageant or tragedy acted by the Smiths Company of Coventry in 1584. It was written by John Smith of St. John's College, Oxford, as the entry in the Coventry Municipal MSS. shows: "Paid to Mr. Smythe of Oxford the XV. daye of Aprill, 1584, for his paynes for writing of the tragidye, xij. li. vi. s. viij. d." In 1598 Thomas Dekker published a poem called *Canaans Calamity* on the same subject. Cf. *The Non-Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, edited by A. B. Grossart, I, 1-69.

¹⁸⁷ *Works*, II, 337—*Bell. Jud.*, Lib. V, cap. 10, §§2-3.

¹⁸⁸ *Works*, II, 338-9—*Bell. Jud.*, Lib. V, cap. 1, §2.

high-priest, and his three sons at the hands of Simon.¹³⁹ The burning of the temple is drawn from the description in Book VI. Although Crowne may be indebted to Racine for his use of Antiochus, he is historically justified by Josephus for making him an assistant of Titus at the siege of the city.¹⁴⁰ Josephus also makes mention of one Malichus, king of the Arabians, in his *De Bello Judaico*,¹⁴¹ but like Phraates IV he lived in the time of Herod. He may, however, have suggested the name 'Malchus' to the dramatist.

Just as Clarona and Phraartes are the predominant figures in Part I, so in Part II the rôles of Titus and Berenice are most important. Corneille and Racine had both written plays in 1670 on the subject of the parting of the Roman emperor and the Jewish queen. As Crowne says in his epistle to the reader, "Some persons accused me of stealing the parts of Titus and Berenice from the French play written by Mr. Racine on the same subject." He then continues, "But a gentleman having lately translated that play and exposed it to public view on the stage, has saved me that labour, [of justification] and vindicated me better than I can myself."¹⁴² Let us see how far Crowne's assertion that "borrowing or stealing from Mr. Racine could not have supplied my occasions,"¹⁴² is justified. Certain differences between the two plays are at once apparent. The action of Racine's piece takes place at Rome. Crowne, on the other hand, has juggled the facts of history; he has relegated the early courtship of Titus and Berenice to a period antedating the siege of Jerusalem, and provided for their final parting at the siege. Another striking difference in the two plays is formed in the part of Antiochus. In the French drama he plays a considerable rôle as a more or less formidable rival to Titus. In Crowne's play he is only a despairing suitor on a footing with Malchus, while Monobazus takes his place as a more important rival.

It would be an injustice to Crowne to accuse him of attempting an adaptation of Racine's play, but he was manifestly influenced by the Frenchman's work. Incidents in Racine are frequently paralleled in the English work, as a detailed study will show. The scene in the first act in which Tiberias counsels Titus to give up Berenice, arguing that Rome would not permit a foreign queen to

¹³⁹ *Works*, II, 378-9—*Bell. Jud.*, Lib. IV, cap. 5, §2; Lib. V, cap. 13, §1.

¹⁴⁰ *Bell. Jud.*, Lib. V, cap. 11, §3.

¹⁴¹ *Bell. Jud.*, Lib. I, cap. 14, §1.

¹⁴² *Works*, II, 238.

reign, draws frequent suggestions from Racine's scene where Titus asks the advice of Paulinus.¹⁴³ The resolve of Titus to part with Berenice is received by Tiberias and Paulinus in each case with surprise but with praise. By Racine, Titus is made to say

"Ah! que sous de *beaux noms* cette gloire est cruelle!"

while in Crowne he says

"Oh! we with *specious names* ourselves deceive,
And solid joys for empty titles leave."

In the same scene the interview between Titus and Berenice, with Tiberias and Semandra in the background, parallels Racine's play in some particular turns of dialogue.¹⁴⁴ The sudden departure of Titus in each is noteworthy. Again, the startled comments of Berenice and Semandra imitate those of *Bérénice* and Phoenixe.¹⁴⁵ Crowne's use of Antiochus of Compagene as a lover of Berenice was suggested by Racine.¹⁴⁶ In Act IV the renewed arguments which Tiberias uses against Berenice in a long speech owe much to a similar speech of Paulinus.¹⁴⁷ Monobazus is utilized by Crowne to assume somewhat the same rôle as active lover of Berenice which Antiochus performs in the French play. Berenice's sudden suspicion that Titus may be jealous of Monobazus seems to owe its origin to a similar expression which Racine puts into the mouth of the Jewish queen.¹⁴⁸ In the English play, Tiberias, however, takes the place of Antiochus as a messenger of dismissal. The final pronouncements of the former and the speeches of Berenice and Semandra which follow are very like those in a scene of *Bérénice*.¹⁴⁹ Semandra's request that Berenice calm her disorder and replace her veil before she sees Titus, and her reply that he shall see what distress he has wrought closely parallel similar dialogue in Racine.¹⁵⁰ The last interview between Titus and Berenice in Act V opens with dialogue very like that in the final act of Racine's play.¹⁵¹

The foregoing comparison indicates that while Crowne's obligations to Racine were considerable, they were confined to occasional imitations of minute features of the Frenchman's work, and

¹⁴³ *Works*, II, 329-31—*Bérénice*, Act II, sc. 2.

¹⁴⁴ *Works*, II, 332-3—*Bérénice*, Act II, sc. 4.

¹⁴⁵ *Works*, II, 333-4—*Bérénice*, Act II, sc. 5.

¹⁴⁶ *Works*, II, 348, 362.

¹⁴⁷ *Works*, II, 363—*Bérénice*, Act II, sc. 2.

¹⁴⁸ *Works*, II, 366—*Bérénice*, Act II, sc. 5.

¹⁴⁹ *Works*, II, 369-70—*Bérénice*, Act III, sc. 3.

¹⁵⁰ *Works*, II, 371—*Bérénice*, Act IV, sc. 5.

¹⁵¹ *Works*, II, 390—*Bérénice*, Act V, sc. 5.

to a utilization of the general aspects of the story as he had developed it. The English writer's language is his own throughout. Indeed he never allows the speeches of his characters to become so tediously long as they are in Racine. The general atmosphere is also very different. Racine is altogether concerned with the tragic parting of the lovers. Crowne is concerned with this also, but he displays it upon a background of warfare, military activities, and the confusion resulting in the destruction of a great city.

Although Titus assumes the major rôle in Part II, Phraartes is the conspicuous romantic hero of the whole piece. Here, as in Part I, he owes something of his heroic calibre, of his lordly air, of his mighty strength in battle, to the suggestion of his famous predecessor, Almanzor, in Dryden's *Conquest of Granada*. He is not, however, an imitation of Dryden's hero; he is rather another projection of the same general type. His boastings are few as compared with those of Almanzor. His nearest approach to the high-flown rant of the latter is uttered in a fit of madness. After the death of Clarona he exclaims:

"Where is Clarona gone?
Aloft!—I see her mounting to the sun!—
The flaming Satyr toward her does roll,
His scorching lust makes summer at the Pole.
Let the hot planet touch her if he dares—
Touch her, and I will cut him into stars,
And the bright chips into the ocean throw."¹⁵³

Most of the historians of literature who have paused to comment on the two parts of *The Destruction of Jerusalem* have been struck by the fact that two such mediocre and uninteresting plays were great successes on the stage.¹⁵³ Maidment and Logan alone have a good word to say for the versification, and they greatly overestimate its qualities when they compare it favorably with Dryden's work in *The Conquest of Granada*.¹⁵⁴ Crowne's couplets seldom rise above the level of that mediocrity which they achieved in his earlier rimed play *Charles VIII*. None of the characters is particularly vital or interesting, and the plays have all the defects characteristic of the heroic type. An explanation of the unmerited

¹⁵³ *Works*, II, 383.

¹⁵³ Genest, I, 205, remarks that "it is not easy to say whether the plan or the execution of them is the worse." A. T. Bartholomew in *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, VIII, 190, says: "It seems incredible that such a piece as *The Destruction of Jerusalem* could ever have gained the marked success which it undoubtedly secured."

¹⁵⁴ Maidment and Logan, *Works*, II, 219, write, "if the 'Conquest of Granada,' otherwise called 'Almanzor and Almahide,' was received with such extraordinary applause, it creates little surprise that the 'Destruction of Jerusalem' met with similar success, for so far as regards versification Crowne not infrequently equals, if not surpasses, Dryden."

not relish a play whose central figure is an arch-villain. It is probable that both theatres suffered a considerable diminution of patronage on account of the distractions of the time, if we can accept Crowne's evidence in his prologue:

"In this broil no shelter can be found
In our poor play-house, fallen to the ground.
The time's neglect and maladies have thrown
The two great pillars of our play-house down;
The two tall cedars of the vocal grove,
That vented oracle of wit and love,
Where many a nightingale has sweetly sung."¹⁰⁰

The argument of *The Ambitious Statesman* runs as follows: King Charles of France has dismissed the Constable from his council, and the latter, shorn of power,—the one thing which makes life worth while for him,—plots rebellion. He has invited Henry V of England to attack France, and he has enraged the Duke of Burgundy. Moreover, he wins La Force, a great commander, to his cause; and plots against his own son, the Duke of Vendosme, who is the favorite of the king. Having learned from La Guard, the maid of Louize de Guise, of the love and secret contract between her mistress and his son, the Constable intercepts their correspondence, and forges letters so that it appears to Louize that Vendosme is courting the Princess of Lorraine. This is accomplished through the aid of La Guard. As a result Louize in a fit of angry jealousy secretly marries the Dauphin, who has been a rival suitor for her hand. Louize early laments her match and arouses the Dauphin's jealousy, but she reassures him by means of a trick. The king still shows his displeasure towards the Constable, but allows him to retain his estates on account of his son Vendosme. The Constable, growing desperate, impudently accuses the Dauphin and his favorite, Brisac, of treason. Brisac is imprisoned; but the king is suspicious, and seizes the fortunes of accuser and accused that there may be no bribery.

Meanwhile Vendosme returns from the battle-front and is graciously received by the king. He is a man who has held himself aloof from the vices of the world, and one who pays little heed to fame. Vague rumors which he has heard concerning Louize are confirmed by the Constable who tells him she is "whored" by the Dauphin. In an effort to involve his son, the Constable says that

¹⁰⁰ *Works*, III, 148; See also the epilogue, *Works*, III, 241.

his murder is planned, and that Brisac has been racked for opposing it. By pretending great indignation Vendosme leads his father to reveal his nefarious plot, and lays plans to thwart him. The appearance of Louize and the Dauphin together seemingly confirms the rumor he has heard about them, and in an interview he and Louize accuse each other without clearing up the falsehood. Vendosme resolves to bury himself in some solitude, but before he can depart, finds himself again in the presence of Louize and the Dauphin. She prevents a fight between the rivals. Meanwhile Vendosme has revealed his father's rebellious plot to the king, and the Constable is arrested. The latter has tricked his son into the belief that Brisac was racked; and when the evidence is found to be false, the Constable is released. Although the king protects Vendosme, the Dauphin and the Constable plot his downfall together.

In his desperate game of plotting, the Constable forces La Guard to arrange a meeting between Louize and Vendosme, at which the latter learns that he has been slandered and his letters forged. The Constable compels La Guard to confess that she did it for the Dauphin. Meanwhile the Dauphin is enticed to become a witness of the scene. In his rage he wounds Louize, but is disarmed by Vendosme, who spares him only because of his royal blood. Thereupon the Dauphin continues his favor to the Constable on condition that he do away with his son. The Constable makes a further effort to pervert Vendosme's loyalty, but finds him still faithful. Louize dies in his arms in prison, and the Dauphin again orders him to be racked. The prince openly breaks his promise of favor to the Constable, and the latter leads Vendosme's troops against him. The racked Duke, however, bids them be loyal to the Dauphin and seize his father. La Guard confesses the Constable's arch-villainy and he is condemned to death. In his last agonies Vendosme asks to be buried with Louize.

The story which Crowne here develops has the appearance of being a chapter out of the history of France in the first quarter of the fifteenth century; but a closer scrutiny convinces one that it bears little relation to French history, but that, on the contrary, in its larger aspects it is entirely the invention of the playwright. A remark made by the Constable at the very beginning of the play indicates that the action is supposed to take place in the reign of Charles VI. The Constable says,

"I've sent a secret invitation

To their brave fiery young King, Henry the fifth,

And I've enraged the Duke of Burgundy,
That he has enter'd into league with him."¹⁶¹

Historically such a remark might have been made with some approach to truth by Count Bernard d'Armagnac,¹⁶² who was Constable of France from 1415 to 1418, and for many years the rival of the Duke of Burgundy for ascendancy in the realm. During his brief period of power, d'Armagnac showed a tyrannical disposition. According to Mezeray, "He rendered himself daily more odious by Exactions, without measure, equality, or justice, laid upon the Clergy as well as the Laity."¹⁶³ Again, "The Constable chose rather to see the Kingdom lost than his Authority, and the Burgundian consented rather to have it dismembered by the English, then governed by his Enemy."¹⁶⁴ In 1418 Paris was betrayed into the hands of the Burgundians, and d'Armagnac and his followers were massacred. In these quotations appear certain characteristics of d'Armagnac which Crowne's constable also possesses. Like d'Armagnac he is tyrannical and cruel, and lust for power is the motive force of all his villainy.

In other respects, however, the ambitious statesman of Crowne's piece is so unlike d'Armagnac that we may feel sure he was only remotely suggested by the historical figure. Some of the differences between the two characters will make this clear. Crowne's villain, after having been in power for ten years as constable, is dismissed by the king. Thereupon he becomes disloyal and plots successively against the king, his son, and the Dauphin. He is absolutely unscrupulous in the means which he uses to accomplish his ends. On the other hand, d'Armagnac was constable for only three years; he was not disloyal to the feeble Charles VI, but struggled against Burgundy and met his death at the hands of the latter's forces.

Even though there were a closer parallel than there is between the Constable and d'Armagnac, it would still remain true that the central action of the play is unhistorical. The Duke of Vendosme as a son of Count d'Armagnac, his love affair with Louize de Guise, and his rivalry with the Dauphin, are all fictitious. So too are the rôles of the Dauphin and Brisac. Moreover, from an historical

¹⁶¹ *Works*, III, 152.

¹⁶² Langbaine, 91-2, first conjectured that Bernard d'Armagnac was the original of Crowne's Constable. Cf. Mezeray, *A General Chronological History of France*, translated by John Boutell, London, 1683, p. 434.

¹⁶³ Mezeray, p. 434.

¹⁶⁴ Mezeray, p. 435.

point of view, Isabella, the queen of Charles VI, was a storm center during the period with which the play pretends to deal; yet she receives no mention whatever.

There remains to consider a bit of evidence given by the author himself, which seems to indicate invention on his part. In the preface he says, "I had heaped together all the fancy I had to place myself out of the reach of my enemies."¹⁰⁵ Crowne's enemies accused him, not without some show of justice, of borrowing from Racine in his *The Destruction of Jerusalem*.¹⁰⁶ In his new play, therefore, he aimed to put himself "out of reach" of his enemies by inventing practically the entire plot. This would seem to be a fair interpretation of his statement.

Concerning the literary value of *The Ambitious Statesman*, we have the author's own estimate of its merits. Writing in 1679, he thought it the "most vigorous" of all his "foolish labours."¹⁰⁷ We may accept his opinion. The play reveals considerable skill in plot construction; there is a noticeable reduction in the number of characters necessary to tell a complicated story. Moreover, the blank-verse is fluent, and at times has real poetic touches.¹⁰⁸

THE MISERIES OF CIVIL-WAR, otherwise known as HENRY THE SIXTH, SECOND PART

Crowne's next play was a direct reflection of the political and religious turmoil which grew out of the Popish Plot. The fear of a Catholic uprising, and the efforts of the Whigs under Shaftesbury to preserve the Protestant religion by the only feasible method, as they thought,—the exclusion of James, Duke of York, from the throne,—nearly plunged England into civil war. To the patriotic Tories, who favored the attitude taken by Charles II, the situation was an alarming one. They did not relish the Catholicism of the Duke of York, but they were strong in their support of royalty, and chose to accept a Romish prince, rather than to see the principle of kingly succession shaken. Crowne was a natural Tory and felt the grave possibilities of the situation. Hence, either at the suggestion of the leaders of his party, or of his own free will, he prepared to dramatize the evil effects of civil strife as an object lesson to the

¹⁰⁵ *Works*, III, 146.

¹⁰⁶ See my discussion of *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, Part II, *supra*; cf. also *Works*, II, 238.

¹⁰⁷ *Works*, III, 146.

¹⁰⁸ For example, see the speeches of the Duke of Vendome, *Works*, III, 177, 183.

public. For this purpose he turned to the Shakespearean trilogy of *Henry VI*,¹⁶⁹ and out of portions of the second and third parts developed a tragedy which he called *The Miseries of Civil-War*. It is reasonable to suppose that if Crowne had not meant to point a moral, his artistic sense as a practicing playwright would scarcely have led him to resort to the less inspired plays of Shakespeare for purposes of adaptation. There is evidence, moreover, that the thought of political propaganda was uppermost in his mind. In the prologue he satirizes those who

"fight and brawl
About Religion but have none at all.
Most fiercely for the Road to Heav'n contend,
But never care to reach the Journeys end."

A few lines later he explains his purpose:

"Besides this Tragedy a Rod will prove,
To whip us for a Fault, we too much Love,
And have for ages liv'd, call'd Civil Strife."¹⁷⁰

The epilogue is more specific still; it advises the nation to learn a lesson from the War of Roses, to put down the Catholics and dissenters, and thus to prevent further strife.¹⁷¹

Crowne's first adaptation of Shakespeare was apparently acted some time in the early part of 1680, since it was advertised in the *Term Catalogue* as a publication of the Easter term—that is, between February and May, 1680.¹⁷² It was played at the Duke's Theatre, but with what success it is impossible to state.¹⁷³ It was first published, as we have seen, in 1680, under the title, *The Miseries of Civil-War*, without either dedication or epistolary preface, a rare circumstance among Crowne's plays.¹⁷⁴ In the following year it was reissued under a new title, *Henry the Sixth, the Second Part*, as a companion volume to Crowne's adaptation of an earlier part of Shakespeare's trilogy.¹⁷⁵ No modern reprint exists,

¹⁶⁹ In my discussion of Crowne's adaptation of the Shakespearean *Henry VI* plays I have left out of account any consideration of the authorship of the Elizabethan pieces. Crowne thought of the two parts of *Henry VI* which he altered as plays of Shakespeare, and used them as such.

¹⁷⁰ *The Miseries of Civil-War*, Prologue.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, The epilogue, p. 72.

¹⁷² Arber, *Term Catalogue*, I, 394.

¹⁷³ In the epilogue to *Henry the Sixth, the First Part* (1681) Crowne writes,

"But he who did reform this Play does swear
He'll not bestow rich Trappings on a Horse,
That will want Breath to run a Three-days Course."

Possibly it is a reference to the previous failure of *The Miseries of Civil-War*.

¹⁷⁴ *Thyestes* and *Regulus* are the only other examples.

¹⁷⁵ Arber, *Term Catalogue*, I, 462.

since Maidment and Logan exclude it from their edition of Crowne's works.

In the time of Charles II the works of Shakespeare were not regarded with that reverence which the critics of the two following centuries held for them. They were frequently adapted by the playwrights of the Restoration to conform, as they thought, to the more refined tastes of their own era. Only widespread ignorance of the great master's plays could have made possible Crowne's brazen statement in the prologue in regard to his adaptation:

"For by his feeble Skill 'tis built alone,

The Divine Shakespeare did not lay one Stone."¹⁷⁶

The facts are otherwise. To pursue our author's figure of speech, one might say that, in reality, Crowne considered the Shakespearean edifice old-fashioned and out of accord with the dramatic structures of his own day; whereupon he tore down a large part of the old building, and adding some new material to the old lumber and masonry, erected a structure, in a mixed type of architecture, the main outlines of which were old, but of which the ornaments and style were new. A tabular comparison will make this clear.

Henry the Sixth

*The Miseries of Civil-War*¹⁷⁷

| | |
|---|--------|
| Part II, IV, 2, 6, 7, 8..... | I, 1 |
| V, 1 | I, 2 |
| V, 2, 3 | II, 1 |
| [The latter part of the scene (pp. 17-20) is original] | |
| | II, 2 |
| Part III, I, 1 | II, 3 |
| I, 2, 3, 4 | III, 1 |
| | III, 2 |
| | III, 3 |
| | III, 4 |
| II, 2, 5, 6 | IV, 1 |
| | IV, 2 |
| III, 2 | IV, 3 |
| | IV, 4 |
| IV, 6 | V, 1 |
| IV, 5 | V, 2 |
| | V, 3 |

¹⁷⁶ *The Miseries of Civil-War*, Prologue.

¹⁷⁷ The scene numbering of *The Miseries of Civil-War* is my own. In the quarto only the act divisions and changes in stage-setting are indicated.

| | |
|---|------|
| V, 2, 5 | V, 4 |
| [Part of the scene (pp. 63-4) is original] | |
| V, 6 | V, 5 |
| [The ghosts, spirits, and close of the scene are original] | |

The principal features of the Shakespearean plot, as the table shows, are retained by Crowne, and are too well known to require treatment here. The new material which the Restoration playwright introduced was largely for the purpose of increasing the love interest. To this end Lady Elianor Butler was added to the *dramatis personae* as a mistress of King Edward, and the Earl of Warwick was transformed into a lover of Lady Grey. Let us consider the latter alteration first.

After the battle of St. Alban's in which the Lancastrians are defeated, Lady Grey comes to the battlefield to search for the body of her slain husband. Warwick sees her and is enamoured of her beauty, but she spurns his offers of love and indignantly departs. The most he can do is to see her guarded safely from the field.¹⁷⁸ Somewhat later in the play Warwick comes to Lady Grey's chamber and entreats her again, arguing that widows are always obstinate. He insists on marrying her, but gives her a month in which to relent, while he goes to France to procure the Lady Bona as a queen for Edward. Lady Grey loathes him, however, and resolves to appeal to Edward for her husband's estates so that she may be independent.¹⁷⁹ As a result of the interview Grey's widow becomes Edward's queen; and Warwick, hearing of the marriage as he is about to sail for France, angrily returns and seizes Edward.¹⁸⁰ Thereafter the conduct of Warwick follows that of Shakespeare's character. There is no historical foundation for the portrayal of the earl as a lover of Lady Grey. The love scenes which Crowne introduces duplicate in a way Edward's efforts to seduce Grey's widow, and the change may have been suggested by that action. It is not unlikely, however, that the idea for it was derived from Holinshed's account: "All men for the most part agree, that this marriage was the onlie cause, why the earle of Warwicke conceived an hatred against King Edward, whome he so much before favoured. Other[s] affirme other causes; and one speciaillie, for that King

¹⁷⁸ *The Miseries of Civil-War*, II, 1, pp. 17-20.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, IV, 2, pp. 47-49.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, IV, 4, pp. 56-7.

Edward did attempt a thing once in the earles house, which was much against the earles honestie (whether he would have defloured his daughter or his neice, the certeintie was not for both their honours openlie revealed) for suerlie, such a thing was attempted by King Edward; which loved well both to behold and also to feele faire damsels."¹⁸¹

The additional character of Lady Elianor Butler occupies a more considerable part of Crowne's play. Through her it was his purpose, apparently, to indicate more definitely Edward's amorous nature. The two are first shown together in a room in London. On this occasion Edward tries to force her, but she demands an oath that he will be constant. His efforts are interrupted by a summons to Parliament.¹⁸² Later Lady Elianor, fearing for Edward's safety, seeks him on the battle field. He forgets the perils of the kingdom in her presence and seeks a cottage in which to enjoy her. She consents reluctantly.¹⁸³ When Richard and Warwick accuse him later of neglect of duty, Edward first exposes their own similar sins, and then in pardoning them, shows that men as well as kings have frailties.¹⁸⁴ After the marriage of Edward and Lady Grey, Lady Elianor appears and accuses the king of breaking his oath; but his passion for her is gone, and he is careless of her curses.¹⁸⁵ The king's discarded mistress last appears in man's habit on the field of battle, where she challenges her lover to fight. He gives her a mortal wound and then recognizes her. As she dies, she bids him hide her evil fame.¹⁸⁶

Although Lady Elianor Butler does not figure, so far as I have been able to discover, in the chronicles of Holinshed or Hall, where the passionate nature of Edward is revealed, she is nevertheless an historical personage.¹⁸⁷ Sir George Buc in Book IV of his *History of the Life and Reign of Richard the Third*, originally published in 1646, gives a considerable account of her and of her relations with

¹⁸¹ Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, 1808, III, 284.

¹⁸² *The Miseries of Civil-War*, II, 2, pp. 20-22.

¹⁸³ *The Miseries of Civil-War*, III, 2, pp. 33-4.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, III, 4, pp. 37-41. This scene is probably a sop to the notorious immorality of Charles II.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, IV, 4, pp. 54-5.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, V, 4, pp. 63-4.

¹⁸⁷ There has been some confusion among the historians concerning Elianor Butler. James Cairdner, *History of The Life and Reign of Richard III*, Cambridge, 1898, pp. 88-92, says that in petitioning for the crown in 1483, Richard alleged that when Edward IV married Elizabeth Woodville, he 'stood married and troth-plight to one Dame Eleanor Butler, daughter of the old Earl of Shrewsbury.' Concerning this allegation Cairdner writes: "The evidence of Edward IV's pre-contract with Lady Eleanor Butler rested on the single testimony of Robert Stillington, Bishop of Bath and Wells . . . According to the bishop Lady Eleanor yielded to his [Edward's] desire on a secret promise of marriage made before himself . . ." Cf. *The History of Comines*, Englished by

Edward. After commenting upon the amorous and wanton nature of that monarch and naming the most famous of his mistresses, he says: "Above all for a time he was much speld with Elianor Talbot, Daughter of John Talbot Earl of Shrewsbury . . . and . . . the Widow of Thomas Lord Butler Baron of Sudesley. Her beauty and sweetness of Disposition drew his desire so vehemently, and with such respect, that he was suddenly contracted, and after Married by Dr. Thomas [sic] Stillington, Bishop of Bath."¹⁸⁸ There was a child from this connection. Buc tells further how Edward becomes enamoured of Lady Bona of France and sends Warwick to negotiate a marriage. Meanwhile he marries Lady Elizabeth Grey. "This Marriage," continues Buc, "cast the Lady Elianor Butler into so perplex a Melancholy, that she spent herself in a solitary Life: and how she died is not certainly known."¹⁸⁹ In acquainting himself with the history of the period of his play, Crowne may well have read Buc's work and thus have received a suggestion for the use of Lady Elianor. One point of resemblance strengthens this probability. After Edward's marriage to Lady Grey, Elianor accuses him of breaking his oath to her. To this he says,

"I, when I please

Can have a dispensation from his Holiness."

She replies,

"What then his Holiness will be your pardon?

A very excellent office for a Pope

To be the Universal Bawd of Christendon."¹⁹⁰

Compare Buc's hypothetical remark; "If after the second Marriage . . . he had . . . wrought the Pope's Pardon for breach of the Pre-contract with the Lady Elianor; then his Apostolical Bull of Dispensation, for his Post-contract, or Matrimony superintendunt . . . might easily have been obtained at Rome, for Money."¹⁹¹

The death of Lady Elianor, dressed in man's habit, by the hand of King Edward, is similar to an incident in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Maid's Tragedy*, in which Aspatia, disguised in male attire, fights with Amintor and is mortally wounded by him.¹⁹² During the

Thomas Danett 1596, London, 1897, II, 50, book V, chap. 18; and II, 100, book chap. 9. Gairdner is inclined to credit the story which Richard brought forward. Laurence Stratford, *Edward the Fourth*, p. 93, is at variance with Gairdner. He speaks of "alleged betrothal to Lady Elizabeth Talbot," but he is apparently confusing the daughters of John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury. Cf. *Dict. Nat. Biog.* under Talbot.
¹⁸⁸ George Buck, *The Life and Reign of Richard the Third, in A Complete History of England* by White Kennett, London, 1706, I, 562.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 565.

¹⁹⁰ *The Miseries of Civil-War*, IV, 4, p. 55.

¹⁹¹ Buck, *op. cit.*, I, 566.

¹⁹² Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Maid's Tragedy*, V, 4.

period from 1663 to 1682 *The Maid's Tragedy* was one of the old stock plays frequently acted,¹⁹³ and Crowne must have been familiar with it both on the stage and in print. This incident has a prototype also in Book III of Sidney's *Arcadia*, where Parthenia, disguised as the Knight of the Tomb, fights with Amphialus, who mortally wounds her, and then removing her helmet discovers her fair hair and beautiful face.¹⁹⁴ Fifteen years before, Crowne had borrowed from the *Arcadia* for his prose romance *Pandion and Amphigenia* (1665).¹⁹⁵ Thus the death of Elianor at the hands of her seducer may be a reminiscence of both Sidney and *The Maid's Tragedy*.¹⁹⁶

The other additions and alterations which Crowne made are of less consequence. On one occasion soldiers are shown in a cottage attempting to extort money from countrymen, who reveal their hoards only after dire threats. Their daughters also are pursued by the soldiers. In a drawn scene which immediately follows, the countryside is seen in flames.¹⁹⁷ These scenes have no particular bearing on the plot; their purpose is rather to warn the audience of the horrors of civil war. The chapel scene in which George, Duke of Clarence, and Prince Edward, the son of Henry VI, have just married the daughters of Warwick, only to learn that Edward has escaped from prison and heads an army, is not in Shakespeare.¹⁹⁸ Crowne probably got his information about the marriage from *Holinshed*.¹⁹⁹ The final scene of the play is drawn from Shakespeare, but it is enlarged by further mechanism to make it theatrically spectacular. The ghost of Richard II appears and warns the sleeping Henry of his approaching death and recites the wrongs of his house.²⁰⁰ As the ghost departs, spirits enter and one attempts to soothe Henry's last moments. They sing a dirge and vanish as Richard enters for the murder. At the end Edward appears to visit Henry, as it were, but finding him dead, begins to fear Richard on his own account. He points to the moral of the civil war that

"A Monarch's Right is an unshaken Rock."²⁰¹

¹⁹³ Genest, I, 334-5; cf. also Langbaine, 212, and Pepys' *Diary* for Dec. 7, 1666.

¹⁹⁴ Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, London 1898, Book III, 317-22.

¹⁹⁵ Walter Raleigh, *The English Novel*, pp. 99-101.

¹⁹⁶ I am indebted to Dr. Wm. A. Neilson, recently professor of English at Harvard for the suggestion of Sidney as a source.

¹⁹⁷ *The Miseries of Civil-War*, III, 3, 4, pp. 34-36.

¹⁹⁸ *The Miseries of Civil-War*, V, 3, pp. 60-61.

¹⁹⁹ Holinshed, *Chronicles*, III, 290, 295.

²⁰⁰ In a similar way the ghosts of Richard III's victims warn him of his approaching defeat and death. Cf. *Richard III*, V, 3.

²⁰¹ *The Miseries of Civil-War*, V, 5, pp. 67-71.

The Miseries of Civil-War frequently retains traces of the language of Shakespeare, but seldom without some alterations.²⁰² Both dramas are written in blank verse, but the older piece shows mostly lines with Marlovian regularity such as Shakespeare used in his earlier plays. In the Restoration adaptation, however, the author employs the freer, swinging rhythm of Fletcher and Shirley. The number of lines with feminine endings is very notable.

On the whole Crowne's adaptation was not very successful. His most skilful alteration, perhaps is in the case of Warwick whose love for Lady Grey gives additional motivation for his change towards Edward. The introduction of Lady Elianor does no wrong to the historical reputation of Edward, but only a Restoration taste would call for the rôle which she plays. Genest considered the whole play very bad, but admitted that it had enough of the original in it to make it "better than the generality of Tragedies written about this time."²⁰³ A. T. Bartholomew dismisses it as a "hash" of Shakespeare.²⁰⁴

Some forty odd years after the production of *The Miseries of Civil-War*, it was utilized by Theophilus Cibber, the son of Colley for a play which he entitled, "An Historical Tragedy of the Civil Wars between the Houses of York and Lancaster in the reign of King Henry 6th." In this piece young Cibber followed both Shakespeare and Crowne, but retained more of Shakespeare's work than Crowne had done. His own additions are comprised chiefly in some love scenes between Lady Anne, the daughter of Warwick, and Prince Edward, Queen Margaret's son. The play was written when its author was not yet twenty years old, and Genest is of the opinion that Savage may have assisted him in some passages.²⁰⁵

HENRY THE SIXTH, THE FIRST PART

The question of the chronological relation of *Henry the Sixth the First Part* to *The Miseries of Civil-War* is an obscure one, but the evidence of the printed quartos points to the prior production of *The Miseries of Civil-War*. It was published, as we have seen, in the spring of 1680, whereas *Henry the Sixth, the First Part* was not in print until the Michaelmas term of 1681; that is, between:

²⁰² A good illustration of Crowne's use of the Shakespearean piece is found in the third scene of Act II (p. 23-27). One should compare it with 3 *Henry VI*, I, 1, lines 50-273.

²⁰³ Genest, I, 307.

²⁰⁴ *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, VIII, 188.

²⁰⁵ Genest, III, 110-13. I have not been able to see a copy of Cibber's play.

June and November of that year.²⁰⁶ If we accept this order for the two plays, there is no difficulty in seeing how the adaptation of part two of Shakespeare's *Henry VI* might have resulted from the previous handling of the story from the point of Cade's rebellion in *The Miseries of Civil-War*. At this time in his life Crowne had two principal interests other than his desire to recover his estate in America; one was the welfare of the Tory cause, and the other, an antagonism to the Catholic religion. In 1680 England was threatened with civil war as a result of Whig machinations following the Popish Plot agitation. Hence Crowne prepared *The Miseries of Civil-War* as a propaganda play. In the course of that adaptation, he no doubt discovered the possibilities for satire against the Catholics in the struggle between the Duke of Gloucester on the one hand and Suffolk and the Cardinal on the other. Thus we have in *Henry the Sixth, the First Part*, as Crowne boasts in his dedication, "No indifferent Satyre upon the most pompous fortunate and potent Folly, that ever reigned over the minds of men, called Popery." It was acted at the Duke's Theatre probably some time in the first half of 1681. Its career upon the stage was brief; for the author himself tells us in the dedication to *The English Frier*, that while it pleased the best men in England and displeased the worst, "ere it liv'd long, it was stifled by command."²⁰⁷

The play before us is a closer adaptation of Shakespeare than *The Miseries of Civil-War*, and even Crowne was willing to admit some indebtedness. In the prologue he speaks of mending a good old play, and a few lines later remarks,

"To day we bring old gather'd Herbs, 'tis true,
But such as in sweet Shakespear's Garden grew."

In his dedication, however, he is more brazen and less truthful. Of the adaptation he writes, "I called it in the Prologue Shakespeare's Play, though he has no Title to the 40th part of it. The Text I took Out of his Second Part of Henry the Sixth, but as most Texts are serv'd, I left it as soon as I could."²⁰⁸ A tabular comparison of the two plays act by act, and scene by scene will show how wide Crowne was of the truth.

²⁰⁶ Arber, *Term Catalogue*, I, 462. W. C. Hazlitt in his *Bibliographical Collections and Notes*, Second Series, p. 151, records a quarto of *Henry the Sixth, the First Part* dated 1675, but this is almost certainly a mistake. So far as I have been able to ascertain there is no other record of a 1675 edition. Historical considerations practically exclude that date. There was no serious occasion then for an anti-Catholic play, and Crowne's other plays of that period give evidence that his opposition to the Catholics had not become outspoken in 1675. Moreover, the prologue and epilogue refer definitely to conditions at the time of the Popish Plot excitement.

²⁰⁷ *Works*, IV, 19.

²⁰⁸ Crowne, *Henry the Sixth, the First Part*, Dedication, (p. 2).

| Shakespeare's <i>Henry the Sixth, Part II</i> | Crowne's <i>Henry the Sixth, the First Part</i> |
|--|--|
| I, 1 | I, 1 |
| I, 2 | I, 2 |
| I, 3 | I, 3 |
| (the last part of the scene is original) | |
| I, 3, line 104 ff. | II, 1 (expanded) |
| I, 4 | II, 2 |
| II, 1 | II, 3 (some addition) |
| II, 2 | III, 1 (compressed) |
| II, 3 | III, 2 (some addition) |
| II, 4 | III, 3 |
| III, 1 | IV, 1 (expanded) |
| | IV, 2 |
| | IV, 3 |
| III, 2 | IV, 4 ²⁰⁹ (compressed) |
| III, 2, lines 368-378 } | IV, 5 |
| III, 3 } | |
| IV, 1, 4 | IV, 6 (original setting) |

The plot of Crowne's second Shakespearean adaptation does not vary in its essential features from the first four acts of *Henry VI*. The most noteworthy change is in the part of the Cardinal whose rôle is much enlarged, since he is the vehicle of Crowne's purpose to add "a little vinegar against the Pope."²¹⁰ Accordingly he is a much more active villain than in the Shakespearean piece. It is he who suborns the three murderers, "soft tools of the church" he calls them, "who will win heaven" by killing Gloucester, a heretic. Two of the murderers believe the Cardinal, but the third is doubtful. He is in the business for the money, to feed his wife and children, having lost much time and wages praying and observing fast days. Moreover, he has found prayers to Thomas à Becket and a "hig dutch Lady" unavailing. To resolve his doubt he asks the Cardinal embarrassing questions, but is silenced by a threat to burn him alive as a heretic. Thereupon the murderers strangle Gloucester in a drawn scene, whereas in Shakespeare the murder is not shown.²¹¹ Later the Cardinal's conscience begins to prey upon him; and he

²⁰⁹ Through a mistake of the printer, doubtless, there is no fifth act indicated in the quarto of *Henry the Sixth, the First Part*. It was probably intended that Act V should include the last three scenes, embracing the discovery of Duke Humphrey's death, the banishment of Suffolk, the agony and death of the Cardinal, and the narrative of Suffolk's death.

²¹⁰ Crowne, *Henry the Sixth, The First Part*, Prologue; II, 3, pp. 22, 23, 24; IV, 1, pp. 47-8.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, IV, 2, 3, pp. 50-55.

breaks into a cold sweat and swoons at the appearance of the ghost of the murdered Duke. Finally, to add a little touch of irony, the three murderers enter and jest with him about infallibility.²¹² Of this new material, the satire upon the prayers of the third murderer, Crowne tells us in the dedication, was drawn from prayers suggested in contemporary French manuals of devotion. The ghost of Gloucester does not appear in the older play, but there is a suggestion for Crowne's use of it.²¹³

Aside from the satire against the Catholics, the other most striking change which Crowne introduced was in the relations between Queen Margaret and Suffolk. Early in the play they reveal their love for each other.²¹⁴ Later, in the midst of the conspiracy against Gloucester, they discuss Henry's coldness and lack of passion.²¹⁵ When Suffolk is banished, his parting with the queen is much more tender and personal than it is in Shakespeare.²¹⁶ Finally, the queen is more deeply affected by the news of Suffolk's death than in the Elizabethan piece.²¹⁷ Crowne's purpose is obviously to infuse some slight love element into the plot, which in the original is almost barren of romance, and thus to meet the Restoration requirements for tragedy. The other variations are of a minor nature. In Crowne, the conjurer, Humes, reports to the queen and Suffolk concerning his meeting with the Duchess of Gloucester.²¹⁸ This incident does not appear in the Shakespearean piece. In the conjuring scene, on the contrary, the part of Southwell is omitted by Crowne.²¹⁹ In fact the number of minor characters is considerably reduced. Among the more important of these lesser figures Somerset is eliminated as a rival of York in the Irish expedition.²²⁰ Finally, there are such other minute changes as the omission of Salisbury's harangue to the commons, and the showing of Gloucester dead in his chair by means of a drawn scene. In the Elizabethan piece, his body is shown on a bed which is drawn upon the stage.²²¹

Although *Henry the Sixth, the First Part* follows its original more closely than did *The Miseries of Civil-War*, as in the earlier

²¹² *Ibid.*, IV, 5, pp. 62-3.

²¹³ Shakespeare, *2 Henry VI*, III, 2, lines 368-378.

²¹⁴ Crowne, *Henry the Sixth, the First Part*, II, 3, p. 27.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, III, 2, pp. 32-4.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, IV, 4, pp. 60-62.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, IV, 6, pp. 65-67.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 3, p. 11.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, II, 2, pp. 18-9.

²²⁰ Crowne, *Henry the Sixth, the First Part*, IV, 1, p. 49.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, IV, 4, pp. 57-59, Cf. Shakespeare, *2 Henry VI*, III, 2, lines 151 ff.; 242 ff.

play Crowne seldom copies the blank verse of Shakespeare line for line; but renders his dialogue in the more elastic Fletcherian rhythm.²²² Here again the percentage of lines with feminine endings is relatively very large.

The criticisms which have been quoted in connection with *The Miseries of Civil-War* were applied by their authors to both parts of Crowne's adaptations. Both of the Restoration versions are bad enough, but *Henry the Sixth, the First part* is the poorer of the two. In but one respect can it claim any superiority over the Shakespearean piece. By centering the play completely around the murder of the Duke of Gloucester, Crowne secured greater unity than was possible in the panoramic Elizabethan chronicle history.

THYESTES

As early as 1679 Crowne was meditating upon the revolting story of Atreus and Thyestes, for in that year he refers to it in *The Ambitious Statesman*. When the Dauphin abrogates his promised favors to the Constable, he comments upon the latter's unnatural willingness to sacrifice his son. Among other things he says

"Now thou may'st eat thy son; the Prince of Day
Is hardy grown, and will not faint and look
As girlish as he did at Atreus' feast."

A moment later the Constable cries,

" . . . I am running mad

With drinking the hot blood of my own young."²²³

The tragedy of *Thyestes* here foreshadowed was produced at the Theatre Royal in all likelihood in the season of 1680-81, and perhaps even before *Henry the Sixth, the First Part* was played at the Duke's Theatre. Its publication in the Easter term of 1681 points to representation in January or February of that year.²²⁴ Unfortunately, in the case of this play, we have no dedication or prefatory epistle to indicate its success or failure.²²⁵ The editors of the *Biographia Dramatica* say that it "met with good success" but on what authority, I have been unable to ascertain.²²⁶ It was printed in quarto in 1681.

²²² For purposes of comparison a good example of Crowne's use of the Shakespearean play is found in the first scene of Act III (pp. 27-8), which is drawn from *2 Henry VI*, II, 2. Here the Restoration author borrows rather closely, but compresses considerably.

²²³ *Works*, III, 232-3.

²²⁴ Arber, *Term Catalogue*, I, 440.

²²⁵ Maidment and Logan in their introduction to *Regulus* (*Works*, IV, 125) state that that play was the only drama of Crowne which issued from the press without dedication or preface. They were mistaken; for neither *Thyestes* nor *The Miseries of Civil-War* has either dedication or prefatory epistle.

²²⁶ *Biographia Dramatica*, III, 337.

The plot of *Thyestes* may be summarized as follows: Atreus, king of Argos, has been deeply wronged by his brother Thyestes, who "with brutish force" ravished his queen Aerope and fled the court. Atreus, enraged by the act, falsely accuses his wife of consenting to the incest and imprisons her in disgrace. He strives to capture Thyestes and avenge the wrong; and when his efforts are unsuccessful, he gives himself up wholly to thoughts of revenge and loses all his peace of mind. Peneus, an aged philosopher, attempts to calm the enraged king, but in vain. Meanwhile Philisthenes, son of Thyestes, and Antigone, daughter of Atreus, have fallen in love and plan to live in exile together. While Philisthenes awaits his sweetheart, who has gone back for a jewel casket which she had left behind, he is seized by the guards and taken before the king. Atreus suddenly hits upon a plan of revenge, and welcomes Philisthenes kindly, learning incidentally from the youth that Peneus is in league with Thyestes. Peneus, finding Antigone bewailing the absent Philisthenes, hurries to court to rescue him. Atreus feigns penitence for his inordinate craving for revenge, and promises Philisthenes his daughter Antigone if he will induce Thyestes to return and be reconciled. Philisthenes appeals to Peneus; and, although he is suspicious at first, when Atreus bids him take the golden ram to Thyestes as a gift, he is convinced of the king's good faith and goes with Philisthenes to bring Thyestes.

Aerope is summoned from her bare prison; and is received lovingly by Atreus, who orders that she be clothed in rich robes. She repeats that she is innocent and there is an apparently happy reunion. Meanwhile Thyestes, who has become genuinely repentent, is summoned by Philisthenes and Peneus. He is very suspicious of his brother's good faith and consents to return to court only because the lives of his son and Peneus will be endangered by his refusal. Thyestes has many misgivings as he approaches Atreus, but they vanish before the profuse displays of friendship on the part of his brother. At the queen's request he affirms her innocence, but Atreus will have bygones be bygones, and bids them all prepare for a festival to celebrate the nuptials of Philisthenes and Antigone. After the wedding ceremony Philisthenes is separated from his bride, and having been stript and bound by priests, is murdered by Atreus. The murderer then invites his brother to the feast at which the flesh of Philisthenes is served as meat and his blood as drink. The revengeful king reveals his villainy to Thyestes and gloats over the grief-stricken man. Antigone, hearing baleful rumors, rushes into

her father's presence and reveals the real love between her and Thyestes' son; and seeing the dead body of her beloved, kills herself. It is now Thyestes' turn to gloat. Queen Aerope, summoned by Atreus to complete his revenge, snatches the dagger from Antigone's hand, and stabs Thyestes and herself. The aged philosopher is accused by Atreus of having wrought this catastrophe, and is banished from the court. The king then turns his attention to the education of his two sons Agamemnon and Menelaus.

Crowne's play is manifestly based upon Seneca's tragedy, *Thyestes*;²²⁷ but in no sense is it a translation, as some of the commentators have implied.²²⁸ It is rather an adaptation of the Latin author's work, in the process of which little besides the superstructure and plot remains. The English writer's indebtedness to Seneca is as follows: Like Seneca he uses Megaera and the ghost of Tantalus to introduce the tragedy, but what in the Latin play occupies the entire dialogue of the first act Crowne compresses to serve as a dream of Atreus.²²⁹ In his attempt to calm Atreus, Peneus corresponds somewhat to the Guard in the second act of the Latin play.²³⁰ One of the few instances in which Crowne preserves the language of Seneca is found in the soliloquy of Peneus at the end of Act I. This is a free rendering of part of the chorus in Act II of Seneca's play.²³¹ Again, Atreus' description of the Golden Ram in Act III is a free rendering of a similar description in the original.²³² In the same act the appeal of Philisthenes and Peneus to Thyestes to return to Argos owes much to a like scene in Seneca.²³³ Thyestes is suspicious in both, and in each he comments upon the safety and pleasure of a life in exile as opposed to one at court. Part of the same

²²⁷ Two translations of the *Thyestes* of Seneca appeared in English before Crowne made his adaptation of the play. Jasper Heywood, a son of John Heywood, the interlude writer for Henry VIII, made a translation which was published in duodecimo in 1560. It was reprinted in a collected edition of Seneca's plays in English in 1581. Heywood's translation is in the main faithful. It is written in seven-stress iambic couplets for the dialogue, and in iambic pentameter alternate rimes for the chorus. The translator has added a final scene in which Thyestes laments his vile crime and mourns the horrid consequences of his act. The original quarto is reprinted in an edition by H. De Vocht in Band XLI of the *Materialien zur Kunde des älteren englischen Dramen*, Louvain, 1913. The 1581 edition of the "Tenne Tragedies" of Seneca is reprinted in The Spencer Society publications. Another translation was published by John Wright in 1674. It was "writ [says the translator] many years since, though corrected, and rendered into somewhat a more fashionable garb than its first dress, at the intervals of a more profitable study the last long vacation, before it was published." (Halliwell, *A Dictionary of Old English Plays*, 246). Wright also wrote a burlesque, called *Mock Thyestes*, published with the translation in 1674. "Thyesteas, instead of returning with his three children, comes back with three cats in a bag." (Halliwell, 173). I have not been able to see copies of Wright's works.

²²⁸ Maidment and Logan, *Works*, II, 7.

²²⁹ Seneca, *Thyestes*, lines 1-121—Crowne, *Works*, II, 17-19.

²³⁰ Seneca, *Thyestes*, Act II—Crowne, *Works*, II, 24-26.

²³¹ Seneca, *Thyestes*, Act II, lines 391-403—*Works*, II, 26-7.

²³² Seneca, *Thyestes*, lines 225-233—*Works*, II, 38.

²³³ Seneca, *Thyestes*, lines 404-32; 446-70—*Works*, II, 53-55.

passages in Seneca serve also as the source for the remarks of Thyestes in the English play when he sees his native Argos again and doubts the advisability of returning.²⁸⁴ The gloating words which Atreus utters as an aside when he has his brother within his grasp were suggested by a similar speech of the Atreus of Seneca. Likewise the action which immediately follows,—the feigned welcome, removal of filthy apparel, objection to Thyestes' prostrations, and offer of a diadem—is all an adaptation from the Latin.²⁸⁵ Again, the scene which the messenger reports to the chorus, Crowne dramatizes for action on the stage.²⁸⁶ Finally, the banquet scene between Atreus and Thyestes in the fifth act is adapted from the last act of the Latin play.²⁸⁷ In practically all the points of contact, except those specifically noted, the similarity is one of superstructure and plot rather than of language.

We have seen that Crowne follows his original in many important respects; on the other hand, his changes are of vital consequence to the action and general effect. In the first place, he reduces the number of Thyestes' sons from three to one. His object, no doubt, was to minimize the revolting crime of Atreus, so as not to disgust his audience; but another reason for the change may be found in the introduction of Antigone as a daughter of Atreus, and of the love affair between her and Philisthenes. The retention of the other two sons of Thyestes as victims would have detracted from the tragic interest in the lovers. The addition of the love element also enables Crowne to alter the scheme whereby Thyestes is enticed back to Argos. Seneca makes Atreus send his sons (Agamemnon and Menelaus) for Thyestes, but Crowne provides a more natural method: Philisthenes is promised his liberty and the hand of Antigone if he can persuade his father to return. Another noteworthy change is the introduction of Aerope as an active personage. Whereas in Seneca she does not appear as a character but is merely considered as a guilty accomplice of Thyestes, in the English play she appears as a tragic example of injured innocence, and ends her own wrecked life after she has avenged herself on Thyestes. Seneca's tragic theme is the revenge of Atreus upon Thyestes and the resultant grief of the latter. To this Crowne adds the poignant tragedy of the blighted hopes of Antigone and

²⁸⁴ Seneca, *Thyestes*, lines 404-32—*Works*, II, 55-57.

²⁸⁵ Seneca, *Thyestes*, lines 491-545—*Works*, II, 57-59.

²⁸⁶ Seneca, *Thyestes*, Act IV—*Works*, II, 62-68.

²⁸⁷ Seneca, *Thyestes*, lines 970 ff.—*Works*, II, 69-74.

Philisthenes, and the pitiful story of Aerope. Yet another addition is the old philosopher Peneus, who serves as a go-between for the two brothers. He is not wholly new, since he performs some of the functions of the chorus; and indeed Crowne may be said to have drafted him from among the old men of Mycenae.

For most of Crowne's additions and changes no source need be sought, but this is not true of the character of Antigone. The taste of Crowne's time demanded a "love-interest" in tragedy, and this he has undertaken to supply in the story of Antigone and Philisthenes. For this we may feel confident that he had recourse to the *Antigone* of Sophocles. The story of Philisthenes and Antigone is in many respects a reversal of that of Haemon and Antigone in Sophocles. Philisthenes like Antigone in the Greek drama is condemned to die by the father of his beloved, while Crowne's Antigone like the Greek Haemon takes her own life, thereby causing sorrow to the offending father. Moreover, the manner in which Crowne ends his tragedy may owe something to Sophocles. Eurydice kills herself upon hearing how her husband Creon has caused the death of her son. In a somewhat similar fashion Aerope kills herself after she has slain Thyestes, blaming him for all her woe—loss of daughter, of fame, and of her husband's love.

Concerning the theme of *Thyestes* Genest remarks that "a stranger subject was surely never chosen for a modern play."²³⁸ Yet Crowne's adaptation is not the only English drama in which human flesh is served up at a banquet. Shakespeare in his younger days did not hesitate to retain such a scene in his revision of the old play (or plays) on the subject of *Titus Andronicus*.²³⁹ Crowne has in the words of Genest, "managed the story much better than could have been suspected, and vastly better than Seneca."²⁴⁰ He softens the horror of the banquet scene and introduces a greater degree of human interest in Philisthenes by providing him with an attachment for Antigone. The crime of Thyestes is heightened by the introduction of an innocent Aerope, whose presence adds considerably to the emotional effectiveness of the piece. On the other hand, one is inclined to agree with Genest²⁴¹ again that the playwright was unfortunate in retaining the ghost of Tantalus and Megaera, and in bringing the golden ram upon the stage. Much more blameworthy however, is the introduction of an indecent song of several stanzas:

²³⁸ Genest, I, 292.

²³⁹ *Titus Andronicus*, V, 3.

²⁴⁰ Genest, I, 292.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, I, 293.

in length at the moment before Thyestes unconsciously eats of the flesh and drinks of the blood of his own son:

"A lovely pair endowed by fate,
With love's and beauty's whole estate;
At the sweetest game have been,
You know, you know what I mean,
You know, you know what I mean."²⁴²

The monstrous lack of decorum here is too patent to demand comment.

CITY POLITIQUES

A determination of the date of Crowne's next play, *City Politiques*, is of some importance, since it has been erroneously given as 1675 for over a century. Egerton in 1788 listed quartos of this comedy under date of 1675, 1683, 1688, and 1693.²⁴³ In the first date, 1675, he was certainly mistaken, as I shall presently show. I have been unable to trace a quarto of 1693 and indeed it is unlikely that one existed. Quartos of *The Countrey Wit* were published in 1675 and 1693, and Egerton undoubtedly transferred those dates to the *City Politiques*. In any case Egerton's error was studiously copied by the editors of the *Biographia Dramatica*, by Halliwell, and by Maidment and Logan.²⁴⁴ Several facts make the 1675 date absolutely impossible. In the first place, *City Politiques* contains a great many references to events which took place during the years of the Popish Plot agitation and as late as 1682. Dryden's two political satires, *Absolom and Achitophel* and *The Medal*, published in the fall of 1681 and the spring of 1682, are mentioned by name.²⁴⁵ In the same connection two poems by Samuel Pordage, *Azariah and Hushai* and *The Medal Revers'd*, both published in the spring of 1682, are spoken of as composed by Craffy to answer these satires of Dryden.²⁴⁶ There are references to the Ignoramus juries of the time, such as that which acquitted Shaftesbury on November 24, 1681, and to the paper of association which was found among Shaftesbury's possessions when he was arrested in July of the same

²⁴² *Works*, II, 14-15, 69.

²⁴³ Egerton, *Theatrical Remembrances*, p. 94.

²⁴⁴ *Biographia Dramatica*, I, pt. I, 158 and II, 105; Halliwell, *Dict. of Old English Plays*, 50; Maidment and Logan, *Works*, II, 83 were aware of the inaccuracy of the 1675 date, yet they retained it in vol. I, p. xv. They mistakenly supposed the 1688 quarto to be the earliest. That the mistake originated with Egerton seems likely in view of the fact that Langbaine, p. 93, records only a 1683 quarto, and that Robert Dodale (Theatrical Records, p. 73) in 1756 gives only this.

²⁴⁵ *Works*, II, 125.

²⁴⁶ *Works*, II, 168-69.

year. In fact, the whole significance of the play is its political satire upon the Whigs of the 1681-82 period.

In the second place, Crowne states in his preface that the peculiar jargon which Bartoline is made to speak was his own invention, and was taught by him to "Mr. Lee," who played the part.²⁴⁷ Anthony Leigh was a member of the Duke of York's company from about 1672 to 1682, when the union of the two dramatic companies took place. The united companies opened at the Theatre Royal on November 16, 1682;²⁴⁸ hence Leigh could not have played in *City Politiques* before that time, since we know from the title page of the 1683 quarto that it was performed by his Majesty's servants. According to one account Leigh did not go to the Theatre Royal immediately after the union.²⁴⁹ Thus *City Politiques* could not have been completed in the form in which we have it before the end of March, 1682; and it could not have been acted until after the union of the two companies in November of that year, and until Leigh had joined his Majesty's servants.

Crowne's comedy may well have been finished by the end of the summer of 1682, for there were considerable difficulties to be overcome before a political play could see the light of the theatre. Each play had to pass through the hands of Henry Bennet, Lord Arlington, the Lord Chamberlain. In the case of Dryden and Lee's political tragedy, *The Duke of Guise*, a delay of nearly six months resulted. This play was in the Lord Chamberlain's hands before midsummer, 1682, but orders were not finally given for its representation until December of that year. It was acted on December 4th, and was among the first plays to be produced by the united company.²⁵⁰ In a similar manner *City Politiques* was delayed. Dennis says of Crowne and his play that "after he had writ it, he met with very great Difficulties in the getting it acted. Bennet Lord Arlington, who was then Lord Chamberlain of the King's Household, and who had secretly espous'd the Whigs who were at that time powerful in Parliament . . . used all his Authority to suppress it. One while it was prohibited on the account of its being Dangerous, another while it was laid aside on the pretence of its being Flat and Insipid; till Mr. Crowne at last was forc'd to have recourse to the King himself, and to engage him to give his Absolute Command to the Lord Chamberlain for the Acting of it; which

²⁴⁷ *Works*, II, 97.

²⁴⁸ *Genest*, I, 392.

²⁴⁹ *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, XI, 869-70.

²⁵⁰ *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. Scott and Saintsbury, VII, 7, 10.

Command the King was pleased to give in his own Person."²⁵¹ In view of the considerable delay here implied, we must conclude that the play was not acted before a date late in December 1682 and more probably not until January or February of 1683. It was originally published in the spring of 1683.²⁵² A second edition came out in 1688.

The production of *City Politiques* undoubtedly caused something of a sensation, but it must have had considerable success as well; for the author in his preface speaks of "flourishing the colours after victory." Langbaine remarks in parenthesis that he saw it acted with applause.²⁵³ It was revived at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields on August 14, 1705, when the play-bill states that it had not been acted for twenty years; but the same theatre played it again on September 2nd and announced that this performance was the fourth in twenty years.²⁵⁴ It was revived again by the summer company at Drury Lane on July 11, 1712, and finally at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields on July 10, 1717.²⁵⁵ It may perhaps be considered as remarkable that a play so strongly anti-Whig should have been played at all during the period following the revolution of 1688.

The plot of *City Politiques* is as follows: Paulo Camillo, leader of the Whig party, has been elected Podesta of Naples to the dis-appointment of the Viceroy and the governor of the city. He has been assisted to the office by Dr. Panchy and the Bricklayer, two of his imperious upstart associates, who propose to do all things according to law. Of the same party is Florio, a debauchee, who in order to intrigue with Rosaura, the Podesta's young, beautiful, and wanton wife, feigns penance for his past sins and infirmities, which mark him for an early death. In his pursuit of Rosaura, Florio learns that Craffy, the Podesta's son, is in love with her, and is seeking an opportunity to lie with her. The Podesta encourages his wife to be kind to Florio, in the hope that he will leave her his estate. Thus Florio is left in Rosaura's company. Their first eager embrace is interrupted by the Podesta, but the quick-witted wife bids Florio pretend to faint in her arms. Meanwhile Bartoline, an old, toothless lawyer brings his young wife Lucinda to lodge at the Podesta's, and learning of Florio's probable legacy,

²⁵¹ Dennis, *Original Letters*, I, 49-50.

²⁵² Arber, *Term Catalogue*, II, 17. There are copies of both the 1683 and the 1688 quartos in the Harvard College Library.

²⁵³ Langbaine, 93.

²⁵⁴ Genest, II, 333, 342.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, II, 500, 612.

bids his wife win Florio's favor. Artall, a Tory, who has fathomed the debauchee's pretense seizes the opportunity to disguise himself as the infirm Florio, and to get access to Lucinda. She falls a willing victim, while her husband Bartoline is bargaining with the political parties for his services.

The intriguing Florio, balked in his first effort to enjoy Rosaura, attempts to clear the field by bringing news of the arrival of a French fleet whose commanders lurk disguised near Mt. Vesuvio ready to burn the city. The Podesta, convinced of the honesty of his wife and Florio, leaves them and goes with his followers to hunt out the French enemy. As Florio and Rosaura are about to seize their opportunity, Craffy knocks. Florio is hastily disguised as Camillo asleep on the couch. The intoxicated Craffy reveals his lewd intentions to Rosaura, and she is saved only by the opportuneness of the Podesta's return. Her quick wit directs Craffy to attack his father as a murderer, and before the identity of the disguised Podesta is revealed, Florio makes his escape. During this time Camillo and his party show little sympathy for the people who elected them, and Craffy has been engaged on poems in reply to *Absalom and Achitophel* and *The Medal* whenever he has not been thinking of his step-mother. At length Florio makes another attempt to be alone with Rosaura, by bringing word and forged evidence of a plot against the Whigs. He is successful and leads Rosaura away to enjoy her favors. Craffy, returning a little in advance of his father, sees Florio and Rosaura together in an adjoining room. He taunts Camillo with being a cuckold, but is prevented by the Bricklayer and the Podesta from opening the door. His accusation is confounded by the arrival of Bartoline, who reports that Florio is ill upon his wife's bed. Florio and Rosaura thus escape from their predicament, and the latter returns to her chamber. Craffy is considered as mad.

In the meantime Bartoline discovers Artall and Lucinda kissing, and the couple openly defy him. Since Craffy's accusation is proved apparently false, he is locked up. Through another trick of Florio the Podesta is led by Pietro, Florio's servant, who is disguised as a Spaniard, to another part of his own house which he is told is the court of the Viceroy. Here he is to be appointed Lord Treasurer. Unfortunately Craffy breaks from his confinement into this very room only to find his father, whom he considers mad when the latter talks of court. Through the accusation of Craffy and the

interference of the governor, Florio and Rosaura are discovered together, but are openly defiant. Bartoline, mistaking Florio for Artall disguised, accuses him by suborning an Irishman to inform against him, but the witness is confounded by the appearance of Artall. The Irish knave confesses. Artall explains that Lucinda is his cousin, and the governor of the city revokes the Podesta's power in order to put an end to his negative influence.

Historically considered, *City Politiques* belongs to an extremely interesting period, which produced in the short space of less than four years the so-called Popish Plot, the rapid development of political parties, the Exclusion bill, and the fall of Shaftesbury. Moreover, it is one of a group of political plays brought forward under the influence of the Whigs and Tories in which the leaders and actions of the two parties are made the butt of witty and often very scurrilous satire. For the Whig cause Elkanah Settle wrote *Pope Joan, or The Female Prelate* (1680) and Thomas Shadwell, his *Lancashire Witches and Tegue O'Divelly, the Irish Priest* (1681). Both were satires against the Papists, but both were political in motive as well. On the Tory side the playwrights were even more active. Thomas D'Urfey wrote *Sir Barnaby Whigg* (1681) and *The Royalist* (1682). He was followed by Mrs. Aphra Behn with *The City Heiress*, acted towards the close of 1681. Otway's *Venice Preserv'd* (1682) concealed English conditions under a foreign setting. In the same year 1682, Thomas Southerne's first tragedy, *The Loyal Brother*, had a similar purpose. And finally, belonging to the same class, there was *The Duke of Guise* (1682) by Dryden and Lee, already referred to. In all of these Tory plays Shaftesbury is satirized in some form or other.²⁵⁶

Into this warfare of the playwrights Crowne plunged in his *City Politiques*, a bitter satire on the whole Whig party, and the most completely political of the entire group.²⁵⁷ "They who do not like the plot," says the author, "must blame the faction who invented the original, for mine's but a copy."²⁵⁸ Under the thin disguise of a Neapolitan setting, he portrays persons and events of the time. Lord Shaftesbury, Titus Oates, Stephen Colledge and Serjeant Maynard, have been suggested as the originals of the Podesta, Dr. Panchy, the Bricklayer, and Bartoline, and in the first three cases the identification is probably correct. As to Bartoline, however,

²⁵⁶ Rose A. Wright, *The Political Play of the Restoration*, pp. 105-120, 129-132, 147-156. Cf. also Southerne, *The Loyal Brother*, edited by P. Hamelius, Introduction.

²⁵⁷ Wright, p. 121.

²⁵⁸ *Works*, II, 100.

there has been considerable uncertainty and an equal amount of discussion. In his preface to the reader Crowne denies any intention of impersonation. "That I never designed," he says, "to personate any one appears, because I have not done it, for I who have drawn the general corruption of lawyers so well as to please considerable judges, indeed the whole town, cou'd with as much ease have pictur'd any man's particular qualities, which I would not hear of, though some would have enticed me to it."²⁵⁹ A careful study of the play, however, in connection with the political history of the time, leads me to the conclusion that Crowne's denial is more or less of a quibble. In no case, perhaps, did he transfer many of the personal traits of any individual to one of his characters, but in several cases traits enough are presented for identification.

Without doubt the Bricklayer was intended to represent Stephen Colledge, the Protestant Joiner. According to the view of a Tory historian, Colledge was "a pragmatistical Man, and a Fanatic," who "was set up as a prime Operator in the desperate Doings of the Party . . . His Province lay in managing Sedition and Treason among a lower Order of Men."²⁶⁰ Bishop Echard contributes a similar account, adding that Colledge was "of a sawcy Behavior with respect to his Superiors, and would take the Liberty both to sing and talk any Thing against the King and his best Friends."²⁶¹ In March, 1681 he went to Oxford while Parliament was in session there, and spoke threateningly against the king and advocated resistance. He was arrested in June and committed to the Tower, but was released by an Ignoramus jury. He was then tried at Oxford and executed August 31, 1681. On one occasion in the play the following dialogue occurs between the governor and the Bricklayer:

"Go. What are you, sir . . . ?

Br. 'Tis well known what I am. I am a freeman of Naples, a bricklayer by trade.

Go. Oh, I have heard of a busy, pragmatistical fellow that calls himself the Catholic bricklayer. Are you he, sir?"²⁶²

The expression 'freeman of Naples' seems to be an echo of the Oxford trial of Colledge, who claimed that as a freeman of London

²⁵⁹ *Works*, II, 96.

²⁶⁰ Roger North, *Eramen*, London, 1740, p. 585.

²⁶¹ Laurence Echard, *A History of England*, 3rd edition, 1720, p. 1011.

²⁶² *Works*, II, 116.

he should be tried there. The term 'Catholic bricklayer' is an ironical variation of Protestant Joiner. Moreover the Bricklayer is pragmatical like the historical Colledge of North's and Echard's descriptions. His insistence on doing things according to the law is doubtless intended to convey this idea. On one occasion the Bricklayer replies to a taunt by Craffy that he can make better verses than the latter.²⁶³ This may be an allusion to Colledge's ballad-singing. In the fifth act Craffy says to Dr. Panchy:

"I' the University of Coffee-houses, the University
of Lies . . . There thou'rt a doctor, and the
bricklayer principal fellow of a college."²⁶⁴

This is a manifest pun on Colledge's name. In addition to this incidental evidence, the Bricklayer occupies a position in the Podesta's council similar to that which Colledge held with Shaftesbury.

It is equally certain that Dr. Panchy was drawn as a caricature of Titus Oates, notorious as the great perjurer and as chief instigator of the so-called Popish Plot. All of the evidence points in that direction. Florio says of Dr. Panchy:

"He is a zealous man, and so seldom calls any man
by his christen name, that he is suspected to be an
Anabaptist and against christening . . . "²⁶⁵

Granger says of Oates that "he was successively an Anabaptist, a Conformist, and a Papist."²⁶⁶ On another occasion Florio asks Panchy to offer prayer, and Panchy, after some quibbling consents.

"I'll do it out o' matter of honour, and matter of
revenge; the priests are rascals and slight me, and
I'll slight their prayers."²⁶⁷

Oates professed Catholicism in 1677 and was sent successively to Jesuit colleges at Valladolid and St. Omer, but was dismissed from both institutions. Returning to England, he presented evidence of a Jesuit plot, and directly or indirectly succeeded in getting a large number of Catholics hanged. This phase of his career is expressed in Dr. Panchy's desire to see all the rogues hanged who appeared against the Podesta at the election, his crying a horrible plot when Florio is accused in the last act, and his willingness to swear to any-

²⁶³ *Works*, II, 180.

²⁶⁴ *Works*, II, 191-2.

²⁶⁵ *Works*, II, 127.

²⁶⁶ J. Granger, *A Biographical History of England*, 5th edition, London, 1824, VI, 5.

²⁶⁷ *Works*, II, 129.

thing.²⁶⁸ In a quarrel with the Podesta about precedence, Dr. Panchy says,

"Go bid the Archbishop of Naples come to me!
I'll make his fortunes."

The Podesta replies,

"He means, bid the Archbishopric of Naples come to him; but it won't come, doctor."²⁶⁹

This seems to be a reference to the fact that in the heyday of his popularity as a "savior of his country" Oates donned episcopal garb except for the lawn sleeves. The Archbishop of Canterbury recommended him for promotion in the church, and Shaftesbury encouraged him to expect a bishopric.²⁷⁰ Like Oates, Dr. Panchy is given to calling people rogues and rascals. Craffy says to him,

"Nay, if rogue and rascal be Latin and Greek, thou art the best scholar in christendom, for no man living is so verst in those languages."²⁷¹

Incidentally it is Craffy, who in baiting Dr. Panchy, gives us the surest proof that Titus Oates was intended. After Craffy has provoked Panchy, the following dialogue takes place:

"Dr. Sirrah, I'll hang you!

Craf. Ay, thou art a doctor at that.

Dr. Ay, and of divinity too, you impudent rascal!

Craf. Where did you take your degree—in Bear-garden?

Dr. In a learned university, sir.

Craf. I' the University of Coffee-houses, the University of Lies, where if any one speaks truth, the University forfeits its charter . . . "²⁷²

This passage contains an unmistakable allusion to the sham degree = which Oates claimed he had received at Salamanca,²⁷² as well as a reference to the hangings effected by his evidence.

The Podesta is to be identified with the Earl of Shaftesbury, but only in a general way, as the leader of a political party having such men in his service as Titus Oates and Stephen Colledge. It was sufficient from Crowne's point of view as a Tory satirist that he should paint the Whig leader as a cuckold, the ridiculous victim

²⁶⁸ *Works*, II, 206, 208.

²⁶⁹ *Works*, II, 174.

²⁷⁰ *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, XIV, 745.

²⁷¹ *Works*, II, 191.

²⁷² John Pollock, *The Popish Plot*, p. 8.

of Florio's plots. In this he was following unworthily in the footsteps of Otway and others.²⁷³ In Craffy, the son of the Podesta, there is the hint of a sneer at Shaftesbury's only son and heir. Dryden in *Absalom and Achitophel* spoke of him as

" . . . that unfeathered two-legged thing, a son;
Got while his soul did huddled notions try;
And born a shapeless lump, like Anarchy."

In his comments on this passage, Scott says of the second Lord Shaftesbury: "He was of a very insignificant character, at least not at all distinguished by mental abilities . . . His want of capacity was a standing joke among the Tories."²⁷⁴ Craffy in his infatuation for his step-mother appears very stupid at times, and is finally considered as mad by his father. On the other hand, Craffy is the poet of his party, and replies to *Absalom and Achitophel* and *The Medal* with two poems, *Azariah and Hushai* and *The Medal Revers'd*. Samuel Pordage, an obscure dramatist, was the author of both of these works, and might well be considered the original of the caricature. Other Whig poets, however, replied to Dryden's satires. Elkanah Settle wrote *Absalom Senior, or Achitophel Transposed* and Thomas Shadwell, *The Medal of John Bayes* in the spring of 1682, and the latter published *The Tory Poets, A Satyr* on September 4, 1682.²⁷⁵ It is likely, therefore, that Crowne's Craffy was intended to ridicule the whole group—Settle, Shadwell, Pordage, and other Whig scribblers who replied to Dryden's satires.

There is more uncertainty concerning the identification of the old lawyer, Bartoline. Langbaine in 1691 wrote that Crowne was accused of abusing "an Eminent Serjeant at Law and his Wife," and the author himself in his preface remarks, "'Tis said I openly confest who I meant by the principal characters in the Play, particularly by that of Bartoline. That this is false, common sense and the character itself will prove." Later in the preface he continues, "That I have made my lawyer old and married to a young wife, is of no more concernment to any gentleman in those circumstances than the description of a thief in the Gazette, by his wig and coat, is to an honest man directly so habited."²⁷⁶ Crowne's Bartoline is thus described by the Podesta:—"The old lawyer is a strange fellow; he is very old and very rich, and yet follows the

²⁷³ See *The Works of Aphra Behn*, edited by M. Summers, II, 198, for a list of plays in which Shaftesbury is satirized.

²⁷⁴ *The Works of Dryden*, Scott and Saintsbury, IX, 239-40.

²⁷⁵ *The Prose Works of Dryden*, Malone, I, pt. I, 165.

²⁷⁶ *Works*, II, 96.

term, as if he were to begin the world."²⁷⁷ These statements all point to Sir John Maynard, the distinguished serjeant-at-law, who in 1682, although he was eighty years old, was still in active practice. Moreover, Bartoline is married to "a young garle." Maynard was married four times, his fourth wife being Mary Upton, relict of Sir Charles Vermuyden. If, as is likely, she was his wife in 1682, the discrepancy in their ages would have been noticeable, for she was about thirty-two while he was eighty.²⁷⁸ There are other reasons also for supposing that Serjeant Maynard was intended. His long career shows some devious turnings and shifts of allegiance which might well have been satirized. He was appointed Protector's serjeant in 1658, but in 1660 he became King's serjeant and was knighted. On constitutional questions he steered a wary and somewhat ambiguous course. He was active in the prosecutions arising out of the Popish Plot, and thus had been before the public just previous to the appearance of Crowne's play. Like Bartoline he had amassed a large fortune.²⁷⁹ Maynard was no worse than the other lawyers of his time, but Roger North has preserved an anecdote concerning him which parallels the action of Bartoline. Maynard had brought action against a man for scandalous words. A witness of the trial reported that a client came to the serjeant with a basket of pippins, each with a gold piece in it. The other side thereupon gave him a roasting pig stuffed with fifty broad pieces. The Bartoline of the play is very mercenary and sells his services at the same time to the party of the Podesta and to the governor's faction. He accepts all their money and plans to serve the highest bidder.²⁸⁰ Maidment and Logan suggested Aaron Smith as a more likely original of Bartoline than Maynard.²⁸¹ Smith was an unscrupulous lawyer engaged in treasonable plots, and one who interested himself in the cases of Colledge and Oates; but I am inclined to agree with Mrs. Wright that the evidence is strongly in favor of Maynard.²⁸² Although Crowne's statement that he intended to satirize lawyers in general probably has some truth in it, there is almost the hint of an apology to Maynard and his wife

²⁷⁷ *Works*, II, 133.

²⁷⁸ On December 20, 1667 Mary Upton was about seventeen when she married Sir Charles Vermuyden. See J. L. Chester, *London Marriage Licenses*, London, 1887, col. 1385. In a copy of the 1688 quarto of *City Politiques* in the Harvard Library opposite the characters of Bartoline and Lucinda in the dramatis personae are written the abbreviations "Serj. M.:" and "Serj. M: yo: wife." The handwriting seems to be of the late seventeenth century.

²⁷⁹ Roger North, *Lives of the Norths*, I, 235-6.

²⁸⁰ *Works*, II, 145, 147-8, 164-5.

²⁸¹ *Works*, II, 85-86.

²⁸² Wright, 125-127.

in his words, "I had a more honourable opinion of those who are said to be personated than to suspect that anyone wou'd apprehend them by two such lewd characters as Bartoline and Lucinda."²⁸³

M. Beljame, in referring to Bartoline, has stated that Crowne reproduces the pronunciation of Maynard,²⁸⁴ but I find no evidence that such was the case, except the author's denial. "Nor is any man," he says, "more than another mimiqued by Mr. Lee's way of speaking, which all the comedians can witness was my own invention, and Mr. Lee was taught it by me." He then explains that the toothless Bartoline is unable to pronounce his dentals, but that for *th* he sounds a *y*; for *t*, a *ch* (as in church); and for *s*, an *sh*.²⁸⁵ The aged Maynard may have had some defects of articulation, but it is likely that this extreme representation of peculiarities of speech was suggested to Crowne as a means of making his old lawyer ridiculous by the successful presentation of Tegue O'Divelly's Irish Brogue by Anthony Leigh in Shadwell's *Lancashire Witches* (1681). Crowne would scarcely have had the audacity to deny the identity of his caricature of Maynard if he had really imitated his speech closely.

Crowne's satire against the Whigs was not limited entirely to the ridicule of figures prominent in the party. In one noteworthy instance he parodied a Whig document and turned it against its originators. When Shaftesbury was committed to the Tower in July 1681, his papers were seized and among them was found the "Paper of Association," containing a proposal to form an association for the defense of the protestant faith against the accession of a popish king. In his play Crowne makes Dr. Panchy report that the Tories have discovered the "Paper of Association," and drawn up an imitation, which he reads. This reproduces a considerable part of the original document, and alters only those parts which it is necessary to change for the purpose of satire, as a comparison of the two will show.

Shaftesbury's Paper

We the Knights, &c. finding to the Grief of our Hearts, the Popish Priests and Jesuits, and their Adherents and Abettors, have for several Years last past

Crowne's Parody

We, the loyal, &c., finding to the grief of our hearts a certain sort of people, consisting of Hobbists, Atheists, Fanaticks, and Republicans, have for several years last

²⁸³ *Works*, II, 96.

²⁸⁴ A. Beljame, *Le Public et les Hommes de Lettres en Angleterre au Dix-huitième Siècle*, p. 155.

²⁸⁵ *Works*, II, 97.

pursu'd a most pernicious and hellish Plot, to root out the true Protestant Religion as a pestilent heresy, to take away the life of our Gracious King, to subvert our Laws and Liberties, and to set up Arbitrary Power and Popery

2. And it being notorious that they have been highly encourag'd by the Countenance and Protection given and procured for them by James Duke of York, and by their Expectation of his Succeeding to the Crown . . . 4. And that the said Duke, in order to reduce all into his own Power, hath procured the Garrisons, the Army, and Ammunition, and all the Power of the Seas and Sol-diery

5. And as We, considering with heavy Hearts, how greatly the Strength, Reputation, and Treasure of the Kingdom both at sea and land is Wasted and Consumed, and lost by the intricate expensive Management of those wicked destructive designs; and finding the same Counsels, after exemplary Justice upon some of the Conspirators, to be still pursued with the utmost Devilish Malice, and Desire for Revenge whereby his Majesty is in a continual Hazard of being murder'd to make way for the said Duke's Advancement to the Crown, and the whole Kingdom, in such case is destitute of all Security of their Religion, Laws, Estates, and Liberty; sad Experience in the Case, Queen Mary, having prov'd the wisest Laws to be of little Force to keep out Popery and Tyranny under a Popish prince.

past pursued a pernicious plot, to root out the true religion, subvert our laws and liberties, and set up arbitrary power.

And it being notorious that they have been highly encouraged by the countenance and protection given 'em by the rabble, and by their expectation of the said rabble coming to the government, it appears also to us, that for these designs ignoramus garrisons have been established among us, by whose assistance these men have laid a blockade before the Crown itself, denying it all relief, unless 'twill own itself a dependence upon them. And we considering, with heavy hearts, how greatly the reputation and honesty of the kingdom hath been wasted in maintaining the said garrison; and finding the same counsels, after exemplary justice upon some of the conspirators, to be still pursued with the utmost devilish malice and desire of revenge, whereby his Majesty is in continual hazard to be destroyed, to make way for the said rabble's advancement to the crown.

The whole kingdom, in such case being destitute of all security of their religion, laws, estates, and liberties: sad experience in the case, the Rump Committee of Safety, Noll and Dick in England, and Massaniello here, having proved the wisest laws to be of little force to keep out tyranny under no prince, or no lawful prince.

We have, therefore, several times endeavoured in a legal way, by indictments, to bring the said criminals to condign punishment;

6. We have therefore endeavoured in a Parliamentary-way by a Bill for the Purpose to Bar and Exclude the said Duke from the Succession to the Crown, and to Banish him forever out of these Kingdoms of England and Ireland. But the first Means of the King and Kingdom's Safety being utterly rejected, and we left almost in Despair . . . We have thought fit to propose to all true Protestants an Union among themselves . . .

In Witness of all which Premises . . . we . . . put our Hands and Seals and shall be most ready to accept and admit any others hereafter into this Society and Association.²⁸⁶

but being utterly rejected and brought almost to despair, we bind ourselves one to another, jointly and severally, in the bond of one firm and loyal society and association: and do solemnly vow, promise, and protest to demolish the said ignoramus garrisons, which are kept up in and about this city, to the great terror, and amazement of all the good people in the land. And utterly destroy all that shall seek to set up the said rabble's pretended title, or shall raise any war, tumult, or sedition in his behalf, or by his command, as religion, and country; and this public enemies to our laws, king, on penalty of being esteemed such ourselves. Witness our hands.²⁸⁷

Grosse²⁸⁸ has attempted to show that Crowne got his stimulus for writing *City Politiques* from *Sir Politick-Would-Be*, a comedy *à la manière des Anglois*²⁸⁹ written by St. Evremond with the assistance of the Duke of Buckingham and M. d'Aubigny in 1662.²⁹⁰ He admits that the general drift of the two plays is different, but he finds some parallels in characters and plot. Sir Politick, he says in the first place, finds a helper for his intrigue in Riche-Source, just as the Podesta does in Dr. Panchy and the Bricklayer. But there is no real similarity here. Sir Politick and Riche-Source discuss some fanciful notions which each has, but they do not get much farther. The Podesta is in power and aims at higher honors. Dr. Panchy and the Bricklayer, far from being reminiscent of Riche-Source, are drawn from men who assisted Shaftesbury in his intrigues. Secondly, Grosse sees a parallel between the two plots, but there is little similarity between the projects of Sir Politick and M. Riche-Source and the efforts of the Podesta and his party to consolidate their power. The plot of Crowne's play, moreover, is based, as the author states, upon the actions of the Whig party at

²⁸⁶ Echard, *The History of England*, 3rd edition, p. 1014-15.

²⁸⁷ *Works*, II, 171-3.

²⁸⁸ Grosse, 36-7.

²⁸⁹ *Oeuvres de* . . . St. Evremond, Paris, 1740, II, 175-318.

²⁹⁰ For the date see *The Works of St. Evremond*, made English by Des Maizeaux, London, 1728, I, xli.

the time of the Exclusion Bill. Finally, Grosse points out that Bartoline, like Tancrede in *Sir Politick-Would-Be*, gives council to both parties. Although this similarity is apparent, the parallel goes no farther. On the other hand, Crowne himself tells us that Bartoline is a satire upon the corruption of lawyers, who were much in the public eye during the numerous trials growing out of the Popish Plot. St. Evremond's play, moreover, belongs to the period of 1662, twenty years before Crowne's production, and it is idle to speculate as to whether the English playwright was familiar with it or not. Even if he were, there is no reason to believe that it served to suggest his political play in 1682. As we have seen above, Crowne's incentive came from the political strife of his own day, and he had many examples of similar work from the pens of his contemporaries.

Although Crowne drew the greater part of his material from the political situation in the years 1678 to 1682, he was indebted to previous English comedies for the ideas which he developed in the parts of Florio, Rosaura, Artall, and Lucinda. The rôle of Florio is a variation on that of Horner in Wycherley's *Country Wife*. Horner has it spread about town that he is impotent as a result of venereal disease and the operation necessary to cure it; otherwise he is in good health, and he professes an aversion for women. His purpose is to make himself free of the ladies and to disarm the suspicion of their husbands. Florio, to "blear the eye" of Rosaura's husband pretends that his licentiousness has resulted in a mortal malady, and that he has reformed and feels a dislike for the other sex. The freedom which Sir Jasper Fidget allows his wife with Horner seems to be imitated in the attitude of the Podesta towards Florio and Rosaura, and Mrs. Pinchwife is certainly the model for Bartoline's Lucinda, "a young garle" from the country,²⁹¹ who enters into an intrigue with the disguised Artall with the same zest which Mrs. Pinchwife shows in her affair with Horner. Besides these character borrowings, Crowne seems to have utilized at least one incident from Wycherley's play. In *The Country Wife* Sir Jasper prevents Mrs. Squeamish from breaking into the room where Horner is enjoying Lady Fidget, for Horner, he says, will do her no harm. Similarly in *City Politiques*, after Craffy has seen Florio and Rosaura together, the Bricklayer and the Podesta hinder him from breaking open the chamber door.²⁹²

²⁹¹ *Works*, II, 133.

²⁹² Wycherley, *The Country Wife*, Mermaid Series. Act IV, sc. 3, p. 324—*Works*, II, 179-181.

Although Florio owes his existence primarily to Horner, he is somewhat indebted to Ben Jonson's *Volpone*. Like Volpone, he feigns a mortal malady. Volpone dons a cap, has his face covered with oils and patches, and lies on a couch.²⁹³ Similarly Florio appears with a patch on his nose, with a pillow, and all the equipage of a sick room. Volpone's dupes are greedy for his estate. In a like manner the Podesta allows Rosaura to be friendly with Florio in the hope that she may inherit a great part of his property,²⁹⁴ and Bartoline likewise bids Lucinda "get incho yish genklemansh favour by your shobriechy, and you may mump my Lady Poshta of hish eschate for oughtch I know."²⁹⁵ As Volpone, with the assistance of Mosca, plays a series of tricks upon his victims, Florio imposes upon the Podesta several times in a number of different ways.

As a partisan satire *City Politiques* has considerable merit. Its salacious scenes, to be sure, are offensive enough to the modern reader, who misses many of the political hits. But Crowne's object was not so much to be indecent, as to make the Whigs ridiculous, and in using indecency for this purpose he was merely following the fashion of his time.

SIR COURTLY NICE

Crowne's next play, *Sir Courtly Nice*, was published at some time between June and November, 1685. As to its composition we are fortunate in having detailed and trustworthy contemporary evidence. We may begin with Dennis's account, which though not written until about 1719, appears to be accurate in the main.

"It was at the latter End of King Charles' Reign, that Mr. Crown being tyr'd with the Fatigue of Writing, and shock'd by the Uncertainty of Theatrical Success, and desirous to shelter himself from the Resentments of those numerous Enemies which he had made by his City Politicks, made his Application immediately to the King himself; and desir'd his Majesty to establish him in some Office, that might be a security to him for life. The King had the Goodness to assure him, he should have an office, but added that he would first see another Comedy. Mr. Crown endeavouring to excuse himself, by telling the King that he plotted slowly and awkwardly; the King replyed that he would help him to a Plot, and so put into his Hands the Spanish Comedy called *Non pued Esser*. Mr. Crown was oblig'd immediately to go to work upon it; but after he had

²⁹³ Jonson, *Volpone*; or *the Fox*, Act I, sc. 1—*Works*, II, 106.

²⁹⁴ *Works*, II, 135.

²⁹⁵ *Works*, II, 136.

writ three acts of it, found to his surprise, that the Spanish Play had some time before been translated, and acted, and dam'd, under the Title of *Tarugo's Wiles, or the Coffee-House*. Yet, supported by the King's Command, he went boldly on and finish'd it; and here see the influence of Royal Encouragement . . . "296

The dedication which Crowne prefixed to the play substantiates the statements of Dennis that it was written at the command of Charles II, who furnished him with the Spanish play from which he "took part o' the name, and design."²⁹⁷ Oldmixon, the historian, who says he had the story often from the poet himself, adds that Charles "oblig'd the Author to bring it to him Scene by Scene as he wrote it." He states further that the king highly approved of the work, except that "it wanted a little more of what Collier calls Smut in his View of the Stage."²⁹⁸

After reviewing the drama critically, Dennis continues as follows:

"The play was now just ready to appear to the World; and every one who had seen it rehears'd was highly pleas'd with it; every one who had heard of it was big with expectation of it; and Mr. Crown was delighted with the flattering Hope of being made happy for the rest of his life; by the Performance of the King's Promise; when upon the very last Day of the Rehearsal, he met Cave Underhill coming from the Play-house as he himself was going toward it: upon which the Poet reprimanding the Player for neglecting so considerable a Part as he had in the Comedy, and neglecting it on a Day of so much consequence, as the very last Day of Rehearsal: Oh Lord, Sir, says Underhill, we are all undone. Wherefore, says Mr. Crown, is the Play-house on Fire? The whole Nation, replys the Player, will quickly be so, for the King is dead. At the hearing which dismal Words, the Author was little better . . . "299

As a matter of fact the king did not die until three days later, but the effect upon Crowne was the same; he had lost his patron and his opportunity of retiring from the theatre.

Charles II died on February 6, 1685 and James immediately ascended the throne. According to Downes,³⁰⁰ *Sir Courtly Nice*

²⁹⁶ Dennis, *Original Letters*, I, 51-52.

²⁹⁷ *Works*, III, 254. More fully Crowne writes:—"This comedy was written by the sacred command of our late most excellent King, of ever blessed and beloved memory. . . . The greatest pleasure he had from the stage was in comedy, and he often commanded me to write it, and lately gave me a Spanish play call'd *No Poesdessor*, or It cannot Be; out of which I took part o' the name, and design o' this."

²⁹⁸ John Oldmixon, *The History of England During the Reigns of the Royal House of Stuarts*, London, 1730, p. 690. Robt. Dodsley, *Theatrical Records*, p. 73, says of *Sir Courtly Nice*, "King Charles II. wrote two Acts of this play." The Merry King was a clever man, but we had not known him for a playwright before!

²⁹⁹ Dennis, I, 53-54.

³⁰⁰ Roscius Anglicanus, p. 40-41.

was the first new play to be produced in James's reign. Inasmuch as it was ready for representation when Charles II died, its composition may safely be assigned to 1684 and its production to the spring of 1685.

The new play was a great success, as we may gather from the author's statement in the dedication to the first edition, published at some time between June and November, 1685:³⁰¹ "This comedy has rais'd itself such a fortune in the world, I believe it will not soon run away."³⁰² Langbaine, writing in 1691, says that it "is accounted an excellent Comedy, and has been frequently acted with good applause."³⁰³ The testimony of Downes is the same. Crowne's own prophecy, just quoted, is borne out by his remark in 1698 that "Sir Courtly Nice was as fortunate a comedy as has been written in this age."³⁰⁴ Quarto editions were published in 1685, 1693, and 1703, and from the title pages we gather that it was frequently acted during these years, since each title-page reads "As it is acted" by his or her Majesty's servants. Beginning with 1703 there are records which show that for the next thirty odd years *Sir Courtly Nice* was acted practically every year, and occasionally twice a year. We may conclude, therefore, that it was no less popular in the years preceding 1703. There was a notable revival of it in 1746, when it was acted about eleven times. It was given four times in the 1750's, and thrice in the 1760's. The latest performances were in 1770 and 1781.³⁰⁵ Thus it held its place in the repertory of the English theatre for nearly a hundred years after its first appearance. In addition to the three quarto editions already referred to, it was reprinted in 1724, 1731, 1735, 1750, and 1765. It appeared in a German translation entitled "Sir Phantast, oder Es Kann Nicht Seyn" in 1767, and was adapted as "Unmögliche Sache" in 1782.³⁰⁶

The plot is as follows: Lord Bellguard has a peculiar "humour" as to the proper means of safeguarding a woman's honor. He believes that she should be kept from the conversation of men, and to this end he establishes in his house Hothead, a choleric Tory,

³⁰¹ Arber, *Term Catalogue*, II, 147.

³⁰² *Works*, III, 257.

³⁰³ Langbaine, 97.

³⁰⁴ *Works*, IV, 353, *Caligula*, the Epistle to the Reader.

³⁰⁵ These dates are from Genest, II-VI. For performances between 1703 and 1781, the following pages: II, 295, 303, 317, 333, 339, 358, 363, 388, 407, 443, 468, 471, 493, 506, 521, 549, 578, 599, 601, 612, 635; III, 1, 45, 67, 99, 106, 129, 160, 175, 235, 255, 291, 326, 363, 442, 474; IV, 48, 66, 184, 191, 201, 211, 281, 340, 381, 541, 593, 594; V, 57, 286; VI, 195.

³⁰⁶ Grosse, 46.

Testimony, a hypocritical Presbyterian, and an amorous maiden aunt, to watch over the chastity of his sister Leonora. Leonora is in love with Farewel, a young man of fortune, but there is a feud of long standing between his family and hers. Bellguard himself is in love with Violante, a young lady of quality and fortune, and she with him; but she is unwilling to sacrifice her liberty to his domestic tyranny. In ignorance of his sister's affair with Farewel, Bellguard plans for her marriage with Sir Courtly Nice, a fastidious lady-like fop whom she detests. In order to circumvent Bellguard, Farewel secures the assistance of Crack, a wizard. Violante also lends her aid by persuading a suitor of hers, one Surly, the antithesis of Sir Courtly, to oppose Lord Bellguard by breaking off the match between Sir Courtly and Leonora.

In the meantime Crack begins his work. In the guise of a tailor he gets entrance to Bellguard's house and delivers to Leonora a picture of Farewel and a letter from him. Her brother later discovers the picture and swears he will have vengeance upon Farewel. Leonora protests that her maid found both the picture and the letter in Westminster Abbey. Bellguard raves against the maiden aunt and the two fanatics; and the pair, who are always at loggerheads, rage at each other. Further developments are arrested, however, by the arrival of Crack, disguised as Sir Thomas Calico, the son of an old friend of the Bellguard family, late from the Indies. He thinks himself bewitched and hates the sight of women. Bellguard is deceived and takes Sir Thomas under his protection. The latter soon learns from Leonora of the loss of the picture and of her white lie about it. Crack soon recovers it from Bellguard by a clever trick and allays his suspicions against Farewel.

Meanwhile Surly has nauseated Sir Courtly by his presence, and pretending that he is in love with Leonora, has forced the fop to promise to defame his rival; that is, himself. Later, when Sir Courtly comes to woo Leonora, she jests with him and brings out clearly his effeminate nature. Surly, finding that the fop has not kept his promise, challenges him to a duel. While all this is taking place Crack again gains admittance for Farewel to Bellguard's house by raising a cry of murder outside. Leonora and Farewel are thus brought together, but the sudden return of Bellguard requires a new stratagem. Crack declares that the women have bewitched him, but Farewel is discovered by the aunt, as he escapes to Crack's chamber. Bellguard is again aroused, but Crack saves

the situation by presenting Farewel as an old friend of his, who is to marry his sister and who has just come to visit him. Bellguard apologizes for his suspicions.

Leonora and Farewel are about to run away together when Sir Courtly appears and woos her with his song, "Stop Thief." While the fop examines himself in a glass she steals away, and the aunt coming from behind, thinks she is being courted. Through an ambiguity of phrase he believes that she is speaking for Leonora, while she understands that he offers her marriage and consents to go secretly to church with him. Leonora, vizarded, escapes with Farewel and Crack to Violante's house. The lovers are being married when Bellguard arrives. He rages at first, but being in Violante's house, he is helpless. Surly is encouraged by Violante to claim her hand and arouses Bellguard's jealousy. The clever young lady forces Bellguard to promise her the enjoyment of liberty in marriage, and then dismisses Surly. Sir Courtly finds that he is married to the vizarded aunt. Hothead is commissioned to chastise Testimony, who has mistaken the masked Leonora for a prostitute and conceived a passion for her.

For the main incidents in the plot of *Sir Courtly Nice* Crowne was indebted, as we have seen, to a Spanish play furnished to him by Charles II. This was the comedy of intrigue *No Puede Ser el Guardar una Mujer* by Agustin Moreto,³⁰⁷ which was itself based upon *El Mayor Impossible* of Lope de Vega.³⁰⁸ For comparison I subjoin a brief outline of Moreto's play.

At a meeting of a little academy at the home of Dona Ana Pacheco, an argument develops between Don Felix and Don Pedro, two young noblemen, as to whether a woman can be so guarded as to be safe from courtship and temptation. Don Pedro holds, contrary to the opinion of the others, that it is possible; and undertakes to demonstrate the truth of his contention by keeping his sister, Dona Inez, secluded from intercourse with the outside world. Don Felix, for his part, undertakes to prove the fallacy of Don Pedro's contention with the assistance of his servant Tarugo, and with the connivance of Dona Ana. The latter wishes to correct Don Pedro's opinion so that she may safely marry him. The resourceful Tarugo by various devices succeeds in interesting the pent-up Inez in the

³⁰⁷ Moreto's play is to be found in *Theatro Hespanol*, edited by Don Vincente Garcia, Madrid, 1785, Tomo I, Parte Segunda, pp. 1-171; and in *Biblioteca de Autores Espanoles. Comedias . . . de Don Agustin Moreto*, Madrid, 1856, pp. 187-208.

³⁰⁸ Alfred Gassier, *Le Theatre Espagnol*, p. 382; A. F. Von Schack, *Geschichte der dramatischen Literatur und Kunst in Spanien*, III, 352.

intrigue, and in withdrawing her from her brother's house in spite of his precautions. In the course of the intrigue Inez and Don Felix fall in love, and when at length Don Pedro is made aware of their marriage he admits the folly of his theory and Dona Ana accepts him as her husband.

A comparison of the Spanish play with *Sir Courtly Nice* at once reveals the borrowings. The part of Tarugo, which is the central feature of *No Puede Ser*, is transferred in its entirety to the English play in the rôle of Crack. Don Pedro becomes Lord Bellguard; Dona Inez is transformed into Leonora, and Dona Ana into her friend, Violante, while Don Felix becomes Leonora's lover, Farewel. Many traits of the original characters are retained. Don Diego, the shadowy potential rival of Don Felix in *No Puede Ser* is metamorphosed into the distinctly individualized Sir Courtly Nice. In this case Crowne borrowed only the occasion for his character's existence. In a similar way the rôle of Alberto, the trusty relative of Don Pedro, whose duty it is to guard the portals of the fortress, is enlarged to include that interesting group of Lord Bellguard's kinsfolk, the amorous aunt, Hothead, and Testimony. For Surly there is no suggestion in the Spanish play. He is Crowne's creation to serve as a dramatic contrast to Sir Courtly. Thus Crowne has added four important persons to his *dramatis personae*: Sir Courtly Nice and Surly, Testimony and Hothead.

The main incidents of the intrigue Crowne utilized practically as he found them. Indeed, such a course was necessary if he was to retain the character of Tarugo, round which the Spanish play centers. The English adapter contented himself with an improvement of the motivation and with giving to certain characters a new emphasis. In this process he discarded the argument concerning the thesis of the play, and substituted a feud between the Bellguard and Farewel families which adds zest to the intrigue. The conflict is further heightened by the new emphasis which is laid on Sir Courtly as a rival of Farewel. In general, it was Crowne's purpose to increase the amount of action and complication which he found in the Spanish drama, so that his play would conform to the taste of the English public. To this purpose and to a desire for contrast we are indebted for the additional characters of Surly, Hothead, Testimony, and the aunt.

A discussion of the sources of *Sir Courtly Nice* involves the consideration, likewise, of Thomas St. Serfe's translation of

Moreto's play in his *Tarugo's Wiles, or The Coffee-house*. According to Dennis, Crowne was not aware of the existence of St. Serfe's play until he had written three acts of *Sir Courtly Nice*; and then, encouraged by the king, he continued his work.³⁰⁹ *Tarugo's Wiles* had been acted at the Duke's Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields in the autumn of 1667,³¹⁰ but it was damned after the third performance.³¹¹ Charles II had been present at one of these representations, but he may have agreed with Pepys that it was a "ridiculous, insipid play,"³¹² and may have forgotten it promptly. At any rate, he probably did not have it in mind when he gave Moreto's play to Crowne some seventeen years later.³¹³ Except for one act—the coffee-house scene, which is entirely extraneous—*Tarugo's Wiles* is a slavish but very poor imitation of the Spanish comedy.

Grosse finds in *Tarugo's Wiles* the intermediate source of *Sir Courtly Nice*. He is able to point out certain particulars in which the two English dramas agree, but in which they differ from the Spanish work. For example, there is an intimacy from the beginning between Liviana and Horatio in St. Serfe's play and between Leonora and Farewel in *Sir Courtly Nice*, whereas in *No Puede Ser* Felix develops love for Inez in the course of the intrigue. In the second place, says Grosse, Don Patricio and Bellguard undertake to guard Liviana and Leonora in order to protect her from the prevailing licentiousness of society, while Don Pedro undertakes to guard Inez as a result of vexation. Finally, both Crowne and St. Serfe enlarge the importance of the rival to whom the brother wishes to marry his sister.³¹⁴ The first two agreements which Grosse notes are the result, directly or indirectly, of the omission of the scene in which the question of guarding a woman is debated. Crowne saw fit to omit this scene just as St. Serfe did, but the reason for the omission in both cases is to be found in the fact that the scene is foreign to English ideas of motivation. If we may believe Dennis's assertion that Crowne had written three acts of his play before he was aware that *Tarugo's Wiles* existed, we may reasonably infer that he had already dropped the scene in which Pedro is challenged to prove his contention, and that therefore as a matter of course,

³⁰⁹ Dennis, *Original Letters*, I, 53-54.

³¹⁰ Pepys' *Diary*, Oct. 5, 1667.

³¹¹ *Roscins Anglicanus*, p. 31.

³¹² Pepys' *Diary*, Oct. 15, 1667.

³¹³ Grosse, p. 45, thinks that Charles II may have given *No Puede Ser* to Crowne in the hope of getting a better rendering than resulted in *Tarugo's Wiles*!

³¹⁴ Grosse, pp. 50-51.

he had given Bellguard the natural motive for secluding Leonora, and had provided the latter with a full-blown lover. As to the character of the rival for the sister's hand, I cannot agree with Grosse that St. Serfe has enlarged his importance in any considerable degree. Roderigo is differentiated from Moreto's Diego by being a country gentleman fond of the country ways, and by lacking any particular enthusiasm for the lady in question. On the other hand, as an acting character Roderigo is of little more significance than Diego. This is very far from being the case with Sir Courtly Nice. Crowne may conceivably have drawn some suggestions from *Tarugo's Wiles*, but they are not apparent.

The influence of Molière which was so evident in *The Countrey Wit* is not entirely wanting in *Sir Courtly Nice*. The character of the amorous aunt was suggested by Bélise in *Les Femmes Savantes*. Sir Courtly, like Clitandre, appeals to the aunt for assistance, and Leonora's aunt, like Bélise, mistakes the appeal for a declaration of love. In both incidents the effect is produced by ambiguity of phrase.³¹⁵ The song, "Stop Thief," which Sir Courtly sings to Leonora, is a free rendering of Mascarille's song, "Au Voleur," in *Les Précieuses Ridicules*.³¹⁶ The version which Crowne used is from Flecknoe's *Demoiselle à la Mode*,³¹⁷ Act III, scene 3, but there is an echo of Mascarille's remark, "Ne diriez-vous pas que c'est un homme que crie et court après un voleur pour le faire arrêter? Au voleur, au voleur, au voleur, au voleur!" in Sir Courtly's words, "So I make the voice shake at the last line in imitation of a man that runs after a thief. Sto—ho—ho—hop—thief!"

Sir Courtly Nice as a character continues the type of fop which Etherege inaugurated with his Sir Fopling Flutter, but he is not an imitation. Flutter delights in the use of French words and in appearing to be Parisian, while Sir Courtly is thoroughly English. Both are lacking in wit and both are fastidious about their clothes, but Sir Courtly is distinct in being "over-curious in his diet." As Henry Fielding expressed it, "Every person, for instance, can distinguish between Sir Epicure Mammon and Sir Foppling Flutter; but to note the difference between Sir Foppling Flutter and Sir Courtly Nice requires more exquisite judgement."³¹⁸

Sir Courtly Nice is by all odds the best play which Crowne pro-

³¹⁵ Molière, *Les Femmes Savantes*, Act I, sc. 4—*Sir Courtly Nice*. Works, III, 342-4.

³¹⁶ Molière, *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, sc. IX—Works, III, 340.

³¹⁷ Maidment and Logan, Works, III, 251 and Grosse, p. 54. I have been unable to see Flecknoe's play.

³¹⁸ Henry Fielding, *Tom Jones*, Book X, chap. 1.

duced. Although it is not equal to the best comedies of the Restoration period, it held its own with them on the stage for a hundred years. Its chief merit, perhaps, lies in the fact that as an adaptation, it is an improvement upon its source. Moreto's play is greatly superior to *Tarugo's Wiles*, but by the same token *Sir Courtly Nice* is superior to *No Puede Ser*. In the first place, Crowne made out of a comedy of intrigue a comedy of manners which reflects the life of the time. He added original characters and made them a part of the piece. The character of Crack is still farcical, it is true, but the main comic emphasis is no longer upon his schemes.³¹⁹ The somewhat colorless characters Crowne improved by making their traits more distinct and lifelike. Farewel is more clearly delineated than Don Felix. Leonora appears to better advantage than Dona Inez. Violante does not retain Dona Ana's fondness for academic pursuits, but she possesses energetic qualities of her own. It is in his original characters, however, that Crowne is best. *Sir Courtly* as the over-fastidious fop we have considered in connection with his predecessor, *Sir Fopling Flutter*. Both Etherege and Crowne follow the technique of Molière in delaying the entry of their fops until the third act, when the situation has been thoroughly prepared for them. The blunt, matter-of-fact, dirty Surly provides excellent contrast to *Sir Courtly*. Similarly there is a noteworthy contrast between *Hothead* and *Testimony*. They are representatives of the two extreme political factions of the time, but Crowne treats them more impartially than he did the political characters in *City Politiques*. He now satirized the defects of both parties. This effective use of contrast is another element of Molière's technique which Crowne had learned to value.

DARIUS, KING OF PERSIA

Darius, King of Persia was the first drama which Crowne wrote after the death of Charles II, by whose decease he lost his patron and his favor at court, and therefore was under the necessity of continuing his play-writing for a livelihood. The reason that Crowne did not follow up the great success of *Sir Courtly Nice* with a comedy he himself explains in the dedication of his new play. He was the victim of a "tedious sickness," else he "had not meddled with tragedy" at a time when the taste of the public was strongly in favor of comedy.³²⁰

³¹⁹ During the eighteenth century *Sir Courtly Nice* was sometimes played with *Crack*, *Hothead*, and *Testimony* omitted entirely.

³²⁰ *Works*, III, 370.

The play was acted, in all probability, in April, 1688, for on May 5th of that year Lord Granville wrote to Sir William Leveson:

"The town is as empty of news as the Court; we have had a new play called *The Fall of Darius* (written by Crowne), by which the poet, though he could get no fame, yet had a most extraordinary third day by reason of the King's presence at it; the first day of its acting Mrs. Bower [Mrs. Barry] was taken so violently ill in the midst of her part that she was forced to be carried off and instead of dying in jest was in danger of doing it in earnest."³²¹

Further evidence for the date is found in the year of publication. — *Darius* was advertised in the *Term Catalogue* as a publication of Trinity term, 1688; that is, between May and July of that year.³²² The title-page of this edition contains the words "as it is acted by their Majesties servants."³²³ The evidence which Lord Granville gives concerning the unfortunate circumstances connected with the first performance is corroborated by Crowne himself in his dedication:

"A misfortune fell upon this play, that might very well dizzy the judgment of my audience. Just before the play began, Mrs. Barry was struck with a very violent fever, that took all spirit from her, by consequence from the play; the scenes she acted fell dead from her; and in the fourth act her distemper grew so much upon her, she cou'd go on no farther, but all her part in that act was wholly cut out, and neither spoke nor read; that the people went away without knowing the contexture of the play yet thought they knew all."³²⁴

Crowne testifies also to the presence of King James on the third day, and returns thanks to him for the favor.³²⁵ That the receipts were extraordinary, as Lord Granville says, the author himself bears witness when he writes, "Let men have what opinions they will of this play, they have paid me for them and paid me handsomely." Thus it appears that though *Darius* was not a success on the stage, the author received considerable satisfaction in the financial returns. It was published, as we have seen, in the summer of 1688 by two printing firms, each having a half interest.³²⁶

Before the time of Crowne the subject of *Darius* had been

³²¹ *Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, Fifth Report, 1876, pp. 197-98.*

³²² Arber, *Term Catalogue*, II, 231. It was entered on the Stationer's Register June 12, 1688. Cf. *A Transcript of the Registers of the Stationers' Company, 1640-1708, A. D., III, 333.*

³²³ Original Quarto of *Darius*, 1688.

³²⁴ *Works*, III, 371.

³²⁵ *Works*, III, 372.

³²⁶ *A Transcript of the Registers of the Stationers Company, 1640-1708, III, 333.* Richard Bentley had one half interest, and Joseph Knight and Francis Saunders, the other.

treated in English by William Alexander, first earl of Stirling, in a riming play on the classical model in 1603,³²⁷ but our author owes nothing to this tragedy and was probably unaware of its existence. More recently Nathaniel Lee had scored a great success in his tragedy, *The Rival Queens, or The Death of Alexander the Great* (1677), which brought the daughter of Darius and his aged mother upon the stage, and treated of him incidentally. Crowne felt obliged, therefore, to omit the persons of Darius' family from his play, and in this he was supported by the advice of friends.³²⁸ In the place of these characters he introduced the episodes connected with Barzana and Memnon, "obscurely descended," he says, "from my fancy."

The story as Crowne tells it is as follows: The action begins at a time when Darius and the Persians have been defeated by Alexander, and his wife and children captured by the Macedonian king. He still has an army of seven hundred thousand Persians left, however, and a great deal of courage. Artabasus, his general, Patron, a faithful Greek ally, and Memnon son of Bessus are loyal to him; but the other Persian leaders, Bessus, Nabarzanes, and Dataphernes, plot their own advantage, and in the ensuing battle withdraw their aid at a critical moment. Misfortunes accumulate upon Darius. The battle is lost, and he receives news of the death of his queen while she was an honored prisoner in the hands of Alexander. The disloyal leaders ask Darius to resign his crown to Bessus, that his own misfortunes may not ruin Persia. Patron is loyal, but even Artabasus thinks this course best. Darius upbraids them bitterly, but they protest their love for him. The plotters continue their activities, and Patron, discovering them, asks Darius to allow him and his Greeks to be a body guard; but the king will not hear of it. He will do nothing to deserve his fall. At the approach of Alexander the Persians flee, and Darius in despair wishes to kill himself; but Artabasus prevents him. Thereupon Bessus and Nabarzanes take the opportunity to seize Darius, pretending that they will guard him. Later, when Darius refuses their humble requests for power, they murder him. Artabasus and Patron, however, overcome Bessus and Nabarzanes in battle; and when they learn that the king has been killed, they execute the murderers. At the close the ghost of Darius appears in brilliant state.

Running parallel to the main historical action, there is a love plot which concerns the ambitious Bessus, Memnon, his son by an

³²⁷ *The Poetical Works of Sir William Alexander*, Glasgow, 1872, II, 1-85.

³²⁸ *Works*, III, 370.

Amazonian queen, and Barzana, a royal princess who is the recent bride of Bessus. Before the time of the play Memnon has rescued Barzana in battle and mutual admiration has followed, only to be cut short by the exigencies of battle. Later Barzana has been forced to marry Bessus. She soon discovers to her horror that Memnon, whom she loves is her husband's son; and to protect herself she asks Bessus that Memnon never be allowed to see her. Bessus complies and banishes Memnon, but grants the latter's wish that he may take with him the lady of his heart. Memnon, not knowing Barzana's name indicates her to Bessus; and the father becomes suspicious instantly and resolves to establish his wife's infidelity. Memnon meets Barzana to her great distress and reveals his love. She delays informing him of their relation until they meet a second time. When she reveals it, he faints and she is supporting him in her arms when Bessus appears. The enraged father kills Memnon, and Barzana stabs herself after she has declared their innocence.

The main historical action of Crowne's *Darius* extends from a period subsequent to the battle of Cilicia to the time of the murder of Darius, and includes the battle of Arbela. The chief incidents and the historical background are drawn from Books II-VII of the *De Gestis Alexandri Magni* of Quintus Curtius.³²⁰ The main incidents which are dramatized, however, are taken from Books IV and V, especially the latter. Until he accounts for the punishment meted out to Bessus and Nabarzanes, Crowne, generally speaking, follows Curtius closely. The chief episode in Act I,—the scene in which Tyriotes brings word to Darius of the death of the queen and of the manner in which Alexander has honored her,—is a slight expansion of Curtius's account in Book IV, chapter 10. The subsequent historical action of the play from the time when Darius addresses his leaders in Act II until Polystratus finds him lying mortally wounded in a wagon, and gives him a drink of spring water out of his helmet, in Act V, follows closely chapters 8-13 of Book V. The fate of Bessus is narrated in Book VI, chapters 4 to 6, and in Book VII, chapters 4 and 5. According to Curtius, Nabarzanes was pardoned by Alexander, while Bessus after assuming the royal dignity, was betrayed into his hands. The Macedonian delivered him to the brother of Darius, and he was tortured to death. For dramatic purposes Crowne departs from this account and makes both Bessus and Nabarzanes fall victims to the forces of Artabasus

³²⁰ Q. Curtius Rufus, *Historiarum Alexandri Magni Macedonis*, edited by Theo. Vogel, Lipsiae, 1893.

and Patron. The name Dataphernes seems to have been drawn from Book VII, chapter 5.

The love plot in *Darius*, which runs its course independently of the historical part, and which concerns the characters of Bessus, Memnon, and Barzana, owes its origin to the *Hippolytus* of Euripides.³³⁰ In that play Phaedra, the wife of Theseus, king of Athens, becomes enamoured of Hippolytus, bastard son of her husband and an Amazonian queen, through the evil influence of Aphrodite. As she is a virtuous matron, her infatuation makes her wretched; and after much misery she is persuaded by her nurse to reveal the situation to her. The old woman, thinking to remedy matters, brings Hippolytus into Phaedra's presence and only makes matters worse. She hangs herself, leaving a note which lays the blame upon Hippolytus. Theseus, convinced that his son has violated his wife, is indirectly responsible for his death. Diana clears up matters, establishing the innocence of Phaedra and Hippolytus; and Theseus repents his action.

The similarity between this plot and that of Crowne is immediately evident. Barzana, like Phaedra, falls in love with a bastard son of her husband by an Amazonian queen. Barzana reveals her secret love for Memnon to Oronte, her confidante, only after great effort and much misery. In a similar manner after much suffering and mental agony, Phaedra reveals her secret to her old nurse. Oronte brings Memnon into Barzana's presence just as the nurse conducts Hippolytus to Phaedra. Theseus, convinced of his son's guilt, is indirectly responsible for his death, while Bessus slays his own son. Both Phaedra and Barzana commit suicide, although under somewhat different circumstances. In the end the innocence of both parties is made clear. Thus it is evident that there is a certain rough correspondence between Bessus and Theseus, Memnon and Hippolytus, Barzana and Phaedra, Oronte and the nurse. Crowne's chief variation is to make the attraction between Barzana and Memnon mutual, whereas Hippolytus has no love for Phaedra. The charge of inconstancy is brought by Bessus against Barzana, while in Euripides Phaedra at her death inculpates Hippolytus. Furthermore, one of the dramatic situations which Euripides created was utilized effectively by Crowne. The scene in which Barzana, after much misery and mental agony finally reveals her secret love

³³⁰ Langbaine, p. 97, pointed out this possibility.

for Memnon to Oronte, is a reworking of a similar scene between Phaedra and her nurse.³³¹

While Crowne thus went to Euripides for the framework and characters of his sub-plot, he borrowed the names of his hero and heroine from "The History of Barsina," a minor story in La Calprenède's *Cassandra*.³³² The story of Barsina has thus been summarized: "Barsina, a Persian lady of noble rank, is beloved by Memnon, one of the first noblemen of the kingdom, and also by Oxyartes, brother to the king. At first friendly toward each other, the two suitors gradually drift into strained relations. Memnon refuses to fight with Oxyartes because Oxyartes is the king's brother and accordingly leaves the country, resigning his claim to Barsina; Oxyartes refuses to accept this sacrifice; and Memnon returning marries Barsina. Memnon shortly after his marriage is killed in battle, and Barsina marries Oxyartes."³³³ Crowne might have borrowed the name 'Memnon' from Curtius, who describes a Rhodian general of that name in Book II; but the association of Memnon with Barsina,—only a slight variation from Barzana, the form which Crowne used,—indicates that he had La Calprenède's story in mind.

With this borrowing as a cue, a case might be made for Crowne's use of *Cassandra* for other portions of his play. Mr. Herbert W. Hill has pointed out the similarity between certain passages of La Calprenède's account of Darius and several speeches of the Darius in Crowne's play. The phrasing is frequently close.³³⁴ In every instance, however, La Calprenède is translating Curtius, whose work Crowne refers us to in his dedication. I am, therefore, of the opinion of Mr. Hill that Crowne depended on Curtius rather than on La Calprenède for the historical material in his play.³³⁵

As a poetic production, *Darius* is rather better than the average of Crowne's tragedies, and contains many good lines. True, the speeches of Darius are sometimes tedious, but on the other hand there are fewer flat passages and much less bombast than in *The Ambitious Statesman*. The story of the fall of Darius does not lend itself so readily to dramatic treatment as the history of his family; but, as we have seen, Lee had already utilized that subject

³³¹ Euripides, *Hippolytus*, translated by T. A. Buckley, New York, 1865, I, 179-181; *Works*, III, 410-413.

³³² *Cassandra, the Fam'd Romance* . . . rendered into English by Sir Charles Cotterell, London, 1676, Part V, Book III, pp. 509-523.

³³³ For this summary, see Herbert W. Hill, *La Calprenède's Romances and the Restoration Drama*, p. 7.

³³⁴ Compare, for example, *Cassandra*, *op. cit.*, p. 70, Curtius, *op. cit.*, Book IV, c. 14, and Crowne, *Works*, III, 391.

³³⁵ Herbert W. Hill, *op. cit.*, pp. 46, note 1; 103, note 2.

Crowne must be given credit for considerable skill in borrowing and adapting a love plot which suited so well the other matter of the play. It is likely that the part of Barzana was written by Crowne with Mrs. Barry in mind, and it is easily conceivable that a skilful acting of the part would have made the play much more of a success than it was. The appearance of the ghost of Darius smiling with evident satisfaction at the fate of Bessus and Nabarzanes strikes the modern reader as incongruous. However, ghosts were then the fashion in tragedy.³³⁶ The characterization of Barzana is fairly well executed. Darius is conceived in a sympathetic manner, but the author does not succeed in arousing any great interest in him. Of the remaining figures, Bessus and Memnon are best individualized.

THE ENGLISH FRIER

The English Frier marks the culmination of a series of attacks which Crowne made against Roman Catholicism. He began his open hostility with the production of *The Ambitious Statesman* in 1679. This was followed in 1680 by *The Miseries of Civil-War* and in 1681 by *Henry the Sixth, the First Part*, which was suppressed, as we have seen, because of its anti-Catholic character. In *Thyestes* (1681), although the theme is classical, we find a severe arraignment of priests. Crowne's next plays, *City Politiques* and *Sir Courtly Nice*, afforded no particular opportunity for satirizing Catholics; but after an enforced silence during the short reign of James II, our author seized his first opportunity for renewing his animosity. In 1689 he had much more material for such satire than in the time of the Popish Plot. During his short reign James II had done many things to advance the cause of his own religion and consequently to antagonize staunch Englishmen who associated the Protestant religion with the idea of patriotism and loyalty. He had retained Catholic officers in the standing army contrary to the test oaths, and in 1687 he had instituted the declaration for "liberty of conscience." Moreover, he had elevated Edward Petre, a Jesuit priest, to the rank of a privy councillor and to a place of great influence at court. Therefore, when William of Orange landed on the English coast in November, 1688, to protect the Protestant religion from disaster, and James and his Catholic adherents were

³³⁶ The ghost of Darius had already played a part in Lee's *Rival Queens*. (1677) Other examples of ghosts may be found in Dryden's *Conquest of Granada*, Part II (1669-70), in Otway's *Venice Preserv'd* (1682), in Settle's *Cambyzes* (1666) and *The Female Prelate* (1680).

forced to flee, Crowne found himself in a position to satirize the Catholic priesthood without restraint.

The English Frier,³³⁷ in all likelihood, was not composed or even begun until after the flight of James and the accession of William and Mary. It is scarcely conceivable that Crowne should have dared to contemplate an anti-Catholic drama while James was still in power.³³⁸ Although the play was not published until the spring of 1690,³³⁹ there is every reason to believe that it was acted in the autumn of 1689. In the first place Crowne says of himself in the prologue.

"Today he does make bold a farce to shew,
Priests made and acted here some months ago."³⁴⁰

The priestly farce came to an end in December 1688 with the flight of James;³⁴¹ hence "some months ago" refers back to that time from the distance of a half-year or more, probably from the beginning of the theatrical season in the autumn of 1689. A further historical reference in the epilogue substantiates this date. Crowne writes

"Tis treason now French interest to advance:
And French commodities are all by law
Doom'd to be burnt."³⁴²

On August 24, 1689, Parliament passed an act forbidding all trade and commerce with France. Among other things this act prohibited the importation of, or trade in paper, or in "any Goods, Commodities or Manufactures made of, or mixed with Silk, Thread, Wooll, Hair, Gold, Silver, Leather." If any such were found, "the said Linens, Silks, Salt, or Paper . . . shall be publicly Burnt and Destroyed."³⁴³ It is likely that the playwright's reference to the statute would be made at a time shortly after its enactment, when it was prominent in the public consciousness; that is, in the autumn of 1689. As I have already said, *The English Frier* was first printed in 1690.

³³⁷ It is an obvious suggestion that Crowne drew his title, "The English Frier" from Dryden's famous tragi-comedy with a similar name, *The Spanish Frier*. Plausibility is lent to this suggestion by the fact that while representation of Dryden's play had been forbidden during the reign of James II, it was acted in June 1689, and was the first play which Queen Mary saw after her return to England. Incidentally several passages referring to Queen Leonora as a usurper caused Queen Mary to blush and to use her fan to conceal her confusion. There is a rare possibility that Dryden's play may have suggested to Crowne his satire against friars and priests, but, on the other hand, it is likely that he was already at work on his play before June, 1689, since he was a slow plotter. Cf. Genest, I, 473-4.

³³⁸ Grosse, p. 60, infers from the prologue that *The English Frier* was written in 1688, but for the reason stated above, I consider this an erroneous inference.

³³⁹ Arber, *Term Catalogue*, II, 313.

³⁴⁰ *Works*, IV, 27.

³⁴¹ Ranke, *A History of England*, IV, 462, 466.

³⁴² *Works*, IV, 121.

³⁴³ *Public Acts of William and Mary*, p. 475 ff.

Crowne's play had a brief and stormy career. Upon its first appearance, the enemies whom the dramatist had raised up as a result of his *City Politiques*, made such a commotion in the pit that the actors could not be heard. "They ran upon edge and point, and fought it with head, stick and heel." Presumably it was withdrawn after the third night. "The players," says Crowne, "thought fit to keep it down, to preserve the peace of the stage, for otherwise they would never have given over a play which brought so much good company together, as this did on the third day, by its own strength."²⁴⁴

The plot of this play, which gave offense to so many, is as follows: Lord Stately, a vain, ceremonious nobleman, who worships titles and seeks advancement at court, has two attractive daughters, **Laura**, "a great Gallant and Coquet," and **Julia**, a quiet, sensible girl. Lord Wiseman and Mr. Bellamour, respectable Protestant young men, are suitors for their hands and are acceptable to their father. Lord Stately himself is a suitor for the hand of Lady Pinchgut, a rich Catholic widow, who is so parsimonious with her servants that her coachman complains of being starved and ill-clothed. **Madam Airy**, the mistress of Wiseman, is jealous of Laura as the proposed wife of her lover; and incites Young Ranter, an obstreperous drinking bully, who is encouraged to lewdness by his father and Dullman, to make love to Laura. The opportunity is offered when Laura, pretending illness, receives Ranter in her bedchamber. They are interrupted, however, by the unexpected arrival of Lord Stately with Wiseman and Bellamour. Wiseman is suspicious, and Stately insists that Laura be let blood. Meanwhile, Lord Stately has bargained with Father Finical, a Catholic friar in high favor at court, for a blue ribbon in consideration of a payment of three thousand guineas. Wiseman and Bellamour dislike Stately's intimacy with friars and priests, and insist that he give them up if they are to be friendly with him. In consequence they are dismissed. Through Airy's contrivance Laura fails to keep an engagement with Wiseman, who is directed by his mistress to her apartments. There he finds Laura with Ranter, and challenges him; but the bully escapes. Again through Airy's scheming Ranter is admitted to Laura, who continues to dally with him out of pure sport. He, thinking that she encourages him, would attempt her virtue; but Wiseman's arrival averts the danger and puts Laura to confusion. She and Julia thereupon agree to marry Wiseman and Bellamour.

In the meantime Father Finical is very popular among the ladies, who vie with each other in securing him as confessor and in pampering him with tasty viands. He shows particular favor to young and beautiful ladies, and improves an opportunity of extracting fifty pounds from Lady Pinch-gut for covetousness, on the strength of her coachman's complaint. Finical's failure to give the coachman a decent share of the penance money calls forth maledictions on Catholicism. Even Lord Stately has a disagreement with the friar when the latter fails to advance him for his three thousand guineas. While the ladies and Stately are being gulled of money by Finical, Sir Thomas Credulous pretends a serious illness in order to expose the friar. He learns that his wife's woman, Pansy, is being solicited by Finical, and he arranges with her to trap him. To this end he makes a pretended trip to the country with his wife and leaves Pansy behind. Wiseman and Bellamour learn of Finical's deceptions from Credulous and arrange with him to convince Lord Stately and the ladies of the friar's vicious character. The ladies vigorously deny the charges against Finical, but are forced to be witnesses of the plot. The friar is summoned by a letter from Pansy, and he comes eager to enjoy her. In explanation of his carnal passion he reveals to her the secret practices of the priests and friars, and tells how he cheats Lord Stately, Lady Pinch-gut and the others. As he is about to embrace Pansy, his accusers rush upon him and force him to settle. Lord Stately renounces Popery and accepts Wiseman and Bellamour as sons-in-law. Ranter is married to Airy and agrees to reform.

As is evident from the synopsis, *The English Friar* is made up of two plots loosely woven together. The main action, which concerns Wiseman, Bellamour, Ranter, Laura, and Julia, is original with Crowne; for the rest of the play, however, he is deeply indebted to Molière.⁸⁴⁵ The main features of the sub-plot, so far as they concern Sir Thomas and Lady Credulous, Father Finical and Pansy, are drawn from *Tartuffe*; yet in the strict sense of the word Crowne's product is not an adaptation, as Grosse's account would lead one to infer.⁸⁴⁶ The chief elements of the two plots are the same; a hypocrite imposes upon a respectable family; his deceit is discovered, and through his weakness for women, he is tricked into an exposure of his hypocrisy and sensuality. Father Finical, in spite

⁸⁴⁵ Grosse, pp. 62-63, has satisfactorily disposed of the notion that Crowne's play owes anything to Medbourne's adaptation of *Tartuffe*.

⁸⁴⁶ Grosse, pp. 62-68; cf. Miles, p. 95.

of the fact that he is a friar, retains many of the characteristics of Tartuffe: he is a hypocrite, an epicurean and an avaricious man. As Orgon pampers Tartuffe in his eating and drinking, and is solicitous about his health, so Lady Credulous and her friends prepare dainty dishes for Father Finical.³⁴⁷ Again, Orgon arranges to give his property to Tartuffe, while Lady Credulous sacrifices her husband's wealth to Finical.³⁴⁸ The rôle which Orgon plays as chief dupe to Tartuffe is given to Lady Credulous in relation to Father Finical, and her name suggests the credulity which possessed Orgon. Molière's dupe had one supporter in his mother, Madame Pernelle, but in Crowne several other ladies besides the wife of Credulous are tricked by the friar. Molière employs Elmire, the wife of Orgon, to expose the hypocrisy and sensuality of Tartuffe, but Crowne uses two characters for this purpose, Sir Thomas Credulous, and Pansy, his wife's maid. Sir Thomas invents the trap and Pansy serves as the bait.

The seduction scenes are also borrowed from Molière's comedy. Upon the failure of his first attempt to overcome Elmire, Tartuffe is accused by Damis, and extricates himself only by great presence of mind. A reminiscence of this scene is found in the English play where Lady Credulous comes upon Finical embracing Pansy. The friar quiets the lady's suspicions by remarking that Pansy is at confession.³⁴⁹ The scene in which Finical is exposed imitates Molière more closely. Like Orgon, Lady Credulous, Lady Pinch-gut and the others deny that their saintly friend can be an imposter, and, like Orgon, they are forced to be witnesses. In both plays the unbelieving victims are concealed while the hypocrite is being trapped. Finical, like Tartuffe, considers it necessary to make some justification for his carnal weakness. The French imposter shows contempt for Elmire's husband to her face, and similarly Father Finical shows derision for those whom he has duped. After the exposure is completed, the parallel ceases.³⁵⁰

For the character of the parsimonious Lady Pinch-gut Crowne was indebted to another of Molière's plays. To her he has transferred a number of the miserly characteristics of Harpagon in *L'Avare*. Harpagon begrudges his servants proper clothing, is sparing of money for food, and robs his horses of their hay, so that

³⁴⁷ Molière, *Tartuffe*, 1, 4.—*Works*, IV, 61-2.

³⁴⁸ *Tartuffe*, III, 7.—*Works*, IV, 74.

³⁴⁹ *Tartuffe*, III, 6.—*Works*, IV, 81.

³⁵⁰ *Tartuffe*, IV, 3, 5.—*Works*, IV, 112-118. The character of Wiseman may be slightly reminiscent of Cleante, but Grosse carries parallel-hunting too far when he finds Dorine, as an opponent of Tartuffe, turning up in the sisters Laura and Julia.

they are too weak to draw a carriage. Lady Pinch-gut has all of these traits or variants of them. She locks up her servants' liveries and keeps them only for show; she is sparing of candles and flambeaux; she underfeeds her servants and makes them observe church fast-days; she even locks up the oats for the horses in her closet.³⁵¹ Her comic coachman, who is used to reveal his mistress's parsimony, seems to have been suggested by Harpagon's cook-coachman, Maitre Jacques. Crowne has shown some skill in these adaptations, for Lady Pinch-gut is not only a satire in herself, but serves also to make Father Finical more ridiculous.³⁵²

Although *The English Frier* did not itself become a success on the stage, its influence can be traced in a later production. Colley Cibber's *The Non-Juror*, acted in December 1717, is primarily an adaptation of Molière's *Tartuffe*, but the character of Charles is derived from Medbourne's *Tartuffe, or The French Puritan* (1670), and the characters of Dr. Wolf and Maria owe something to Crowne.³⁵³ Dr. Wolf, like Father Finical, is a Roman Catholic priest, and each is elevated to the rank of bishop. Maria, instead of originating in Molière's Mariane, was suggested by Crowne's coquette, Laura. When Isaac Bickerstaffe adapted *The Non-Juror* for his *The Hypocrite* (1768), his Charlotte inherited the traits of Maria.³⁵⁴

Crowne's play, as we have seen, had its origin in the religious turmoil of the time, just as his *City Politiques* was a result of the political strife of the Popish Plot period. As before, he was accused of representing actual personages, and again he denied the charge.³⁵⁵ In our study of the earlier play we have seen that his denial cannot bear a close examination. Similarly, in *The English Frier*, as critics have pointed out,³⁵⁶ it is likely that Father Finical was intended as a satire of Edward Petre, clerk of the royal closet to James II. Petre, who had suffered arrest and imprisonment at the time of the Popish Plot, was at once summoned to court upon the accession of James, and was made superintendent of the Royal Chapel and clerk of the closet. In November, 1687, he was ap-

³⁵¹ *L'Avare*, III, 1.—*Works*, IV, 43-7, 63-6, 92-5, 113. Grosse, p. 68, sees a parallel between La Fleche and Lady Pinch-gut's coachman and porter, but without reason, it seems to me.

³⁵² Miles, appendix, p. 229, says that Lord Stately is reminiscent of La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas, especially in his treatment of servants, but I doubt if there was any conscious suggestion in this case. Crowne could observe such conduct without going outside of London.

³⁵³ Genest, II, 615-16.

³⁵⁴ Genest, V, 218-19.

³⁵⁵ *Works*, IV, 20. Preface to Reader.

³⁵⁶ Maidment and Logan, *Works*, IV, 4; Grosse, p. 65, accepts the idea, as does Mrs. Wright, pp. 157-58.

pointed a privy councillor, and formed a secret inner council with Sunderland, Talbot, and Jermyn. In the summer of 1688 James made an effort to get him appointed archbishop of York, but the Pope refused on the ground that Petre was a Jesuit. Even before this, when it was announced that the queen was with child, a crop of scurrilous broadsides grew up against Petre; and when the prince was born it was plainly intimated that he was its father.³⁵⁷ In all of these facts one can see suggestions of Father Finical. He is a friar of the convent of St. James and a bishop *in partibus*.³⁵⁸ Evidence of his power at court is seen in Stately's attitude towards him. Father Finical appears in his episcopal robes and considers himself the nobleman's equal, while the latter refers pointedly to the friar's advancement.³⁵⁹ Furthermore, it is natural, in view of the broadside caricatures of Petre as a sensual churchman, that Crowne should represent him in that aspect upon the stage. In this respect our author was not alone, since Petre was ridiculed in at least two anonymous plays of the time. He appears in *The Abdicated Prince* (1690) as Pietro, and in *The Late Revolution, or the Happy Change* (1688?) as Father Petre.³⁶⁰ In Lord Stately Crowne's audience may have recognized some well-known ceremonious court parasite, but he is difficult to identify.

The brief stage career of *The English Friar* did not do justice to its dramatic merits. Its satire is severe but cleverly handled, and the characters are not badly drawn. The rôles which Crowne borrowed from Molière are altered and anglicized. Father Finical has the same basic traits as Tartuffe,—hypocrisy, sensuality, avarice,—but while Tartuffe is a generalized type, Finical is the representative of a particular class whose vices Crowne undertook to satirize. The transfer of the part of Elmire to Sir Thomas Credulous and Pansy, and that of Orgon to Lady Credulous shows Crowne's skill as an adapter. Even more noticeable in this respect is the transformation of Harpagon into Lady Pinch-gut. Crowne utilizes her to bring out the incongruities of her covetousness, but at the same time he fits her cleverly into his general scheme of satire against the priesthood.³⁶¹ Of the original characters Lord Stately deserves especial attention. He is a well drawn example of the

³⁵⁷ *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, XV, 977-79.

³⁵⁸ The Count of Adda, Papal Nuncio, had been consecrated archbishop *in partibus* in 1687. Cf. Ranke, *A History of England*, IV, 331.

³⁵⁹ *Works*, IV, 90.

³⁶⁰ Wright, pp. 160, 162-63.

³⁶¹ Miles, p. 158.

ceremonious and slavish follower of the whims of court. Laura, the coquette, is delineated with vigor and clearness of touch. As we have seen, she was the model for Cibber's Maria in *The Non-Juror*.

The principal defect of the comedy is its loose structure. The entanglement of the main plot is forced and artificial, and there is no clear drawn conflict of forces. Furthermore, the connection between the two plots is very loose. The relation between Lord Stately and Father Finical is a weak link, and no real connection is established until Sir Thomas Credulous interests Wiseman in his plot to entrap the friar. This looseness of structure, however, is a fault which Crowne shares with his contemporaries.

REGULUS

Having experienced the disadvantages of political and religious satire in comedy by the forced withdrawal of *The English Frier*, Crowne turned his hand to tragedy. Again, as in *Darius*, he went to ancient history for his material. We are fortunate in being able to date the publication of *Regulus* with greater accuracy than has usually been the case with Crowne's plays. *The Gentleman's Journal* for May, 1692, announces it: "We are promised Mr. Crown's *Regulus*, before the Long Vacation,"³⁶² and in the June number of the same journal we are told that "*Regulus*, with the Factions of Carthage, by Mr. Crown was acted the last week."³⁶³ Inasmuch as the June number of *The Gentleman's Journal* was licensed on June 17, 1692, the première of the play seems to have taken place early in that month.³⁶⁴ Even without this evidence we could be certain that *Regulus* was produced in 1692. In the prologue Crowne writes,

"Methinks the late victorious day has spread
O'er all your cheeks, a lively pleasing red.
Our naval glory warms you, flaming joys
Kindle illuminations in your eyes
Now we once more shall have the full control
Of our own seas."³⁶⁵

This is unquestionably a reference to the Battle of La Hogue, May 19, 1692, in which Admiral Russell, though secretly in league with James II, was forced by loyal officers under him to engage

³⁶² *The Gentleman's Journal, or The Monthly Miscellany*, May 1692 (Licensed May 14, 1692), p. 26.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, June, 1692, p. 18.

³⁶⁴ These references in *The Gentleman's Journal* have never before been noted.

³⁶⁵ *Works*, IV, 133.

the French fleet under Tourville. The French were preparing for the transportation of an army to invade England and to restore James II, and the decisive defeat of Tourville completely altered their plans.³⁶⁶ Still further evidence for the year 1692 is found in the presence of Leigh and Mountfort among the names of the actors.³⁶⁷ *The Gentleman's Journal* announced the death of Mountfort in November, 1692, and that of Leigh in December of the same year.³⁶⁸

In his comments on *Regulus* the editor of *The Gentleman's Journal* remarks: "This Tragedy is intermixed with a vein of Comedy. You have seen his Works in both. Terence tells us, *Dubiam fortunam esse scenicam*; and if that great Author had occasion to complain, those of our Age may well comfort themselves if the Town deceives their expectation."³⁶⁹ From this it is clear that the play was not favorably received by the public. The quarto edition of *Regulus* bears the date 1694, but *The Gentleman's Journal* for April, 1693 states that the play "is now in the Press." Moreover it was advertised in the *Term Catalogue* as a publication of Michaelmas term 1693; that is, between June and November.³⁷⁰ It doubtless came out in the autumn of 1693 and was dated in advance by the bookseller.

The story of Crowne's play is briefly as follows: Regulus, the Roman consul, has been victorious before Carthage, and has burned the outlying towns and fortifications. There is consternation in the city, and Hamilcar is given forty hours by Asdrubal to bring relief or he will take the command himself by force. Urged on by Gisgon, a selfish senator, Hiarbas, a priest, and Batto, a tricky merchant, Asdrubal is ambitious to make himself king. He has reason to dislike Hamilcar, because the general's daughter, Eliza, has rejected his suit in favor of Xantippus, a Spartan commander in the service of Carthage. A Roman tribune having been discovered entering Hamilcar's house, the report spreads among the people that Hamilcar and Xantippus have treated with the enemy to surrender the city. Hamilcar is arrested and is accused of treachery by Asdrubal. Eliza consents to marry Asdrubal in order to save her father, but she plans to kill him. Asdrubal wishes

³⁶⁶ Ranke, *A History of England*, V, 48-51. Maidment and Logan, *Works*, IV, 126, observe this reference. Browning gives a vivid account of the escape of the French fleet in *Hervé Riel*.

³⁶⁷ Genest, II, 21 pointed this out.

³⁶⁸ *The Gentleman's Journal*, November, 1692, p. 21; December, 1692, p. 15.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, June, 1692, p. 18.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, April, 1693, II, 131.

to get her into his power only that he may violate her and be revenged for her coldness. Xantippus appears opportunely, however, and after rescuing Hamilcar, seizes Asdrubal and his followers.

In the meanwhile Regulus goes into battle in spite of inauspicious omens, among them the appearance of his dead wife Apamia's ghost. Fulvia, his present fiancée, is filled with anxiety for his safety. Her fears are justified, for he is taken captive by Xantippus and promptly clapped into a dungeon by the Carthaginian senate. Xantippus is indignant at this treatment of his captive, who refuses to treat for peace. At the Spartan's suggestion Regulus is sent to the Roman camp as his own ambassador on his pledge to return and to suffer death if he fails in his mission. He hastens to the Romans and explains the conditions, but bids them fight while he goes to death and honor. The army opposes his return with force, but he persuades Metellus to tell them that the Carthaginians have given him poison. Fulvia makes a frantic effort to detain him, but he pleads the honor of his pledge and the glory of Rome, and escapes when she swoons at the sight of Apamia's ghost.

Asdrubal, meanwhile, who has been released from prison and invited by the senators to become protector of the commonwealth, in order to oppose Xantippus, persuades the cowed and cringing Gisgon, Hiarbas, and Batto to recant the testimony they had given concerning his kingly ambitions. He seemingly clears himself, but after his followers are led to execution, he is seized as a tyrant. Regulus returns; and refusing peace, is ordered to be tortured. When he learns of this action, Xantippus rebels and joins the attacking Romans, whom Fulvia is leading. Regulus is found alive on the rack, but he soon dies, conscious of Fulvia's love and his own great honor. Fulvia goes mad. Xantippus is given leave to return to Sparta, and takes Hamilcar and Eliza with him.

Hitherto, all efforts to discover the source or sources which Crowne used for *Regulus* have been unsuccessful. The editors of the *Biographia Dramatica* stated that the story of Regulus is to be found in Livy and Florus;³⁷¹ but, as Genest has pointed out, that part of Livy's history which concerned Regulus is lost.³⁷² The account of Florus, moreover, is brief and gives few details. Maidment and Logan conclude that "none of the incidents of the tragedy have a genuine historical foundation; but they seem entire fictions coined by the author."³⁷³ They, too, are mistaken. The capture of

³⁷¹ *Biographica Dramatica*, III, 199.

³⁷² Genest, II, 21-2.

³⁷³ *Works*, IV, 127.

Regulus by the Carthaginians under the leadership of Xantippus is unquestionably historical. Indeed, Polybius, who is silent about the heroic sacrifice of Regulus, gives a detailed account of the battle. Furthermore, that part of the play which is concerned with Regulus and Fulvia and the consul's betrayal into the hands of Xantippus is based upon a French tragedy by Nicolas Pradon⁸⁷⁴ called "Regulus" and published in 1688. A brief synopsis of Pradon's play will reveal the similarity between the two tragedies.

Regulus, having captured Clypea and reduced three hundred other towns, besieges Carthage. With the Roman army are Metellus, the proconsul, and his daughter Fulvie, beloved by Regulus; also Attilius, the young son of Regulus, in charge of Lepide. Mannius, the tribune, also loves Fulvie, and hates Regulus out of envy and because of an insult he has received. Metellus intrusts Mannius with the task of conducting Fulvie and Attilius to Clypea while the battle rages, but they refuse to go. Fulvie has forebodings of disaster and begs Regulus not to leave her. Mannius, meanwhile, turns traitor and betrays the Roman army into the hands of Xantipus, who prepares a trap and captures Regulus. The news astounds Metellus and Priscus, but they endeavor to conceal it from Fulvie. Her fears are aroused by their anxious faces, but she can learn only that Regulus is not dead. Mannius brings her news of the capture and hopes to win her favor; but she spurns him. A truce is arranged by Asdrubal, and Regulus returns on his word of honor to arrange a peace or suffer death. He deliberately counsels war, and bidding Metellus break the news to Fulvie and Attilius, prepares to return. Priscus opposes the patriotic sacrifice of Regulus, and reveals his determination to the despairing Fulvie. Lepide, meanwhile, arouses the army to oppose his return. Fulvie and Attilius appeal to the love which Regulus has for them, and although they almost unman him, he is steadfast. Metellus overcomes the opposition of the army by pretending that Regulus has been poisoned by Xantipus and Asdrubal, and that he will die in any case. He is allowed to return, and shortly is exposed on the walls of Carthage and tortured to death by Xantipus. Meanwhile the treachery of Mannius is revealed, and he is cut to pieces by the army. Young Attilius rushes

⁸⁷⁴ Nicolas Pradon (1632-1698) was a little known minor French dramatist of the late seventeenth century. Almost nothing is known of his life. No signature or portrait of him is extant. Boileau taxed him with ridiculous ignorance in Epistles VII and X. His tragedies are as follows: *Pyrame et Thisbé* (1674), *Tamerlan* (1675), *Phédre et Hippolyte* (1677), *Electre* (1677; not printed), *Troade* (1679), *Statira* (1679), *Tarquin* (1682), *Regulus* (Jan. 4, 1688), *Germanicus* (1694; not printed), *Scipion* (1697). *Pyrame* and *Regulus* were his great successes. His tragedies are without exception mediocre. Cf. *La Grande Encyclopédie*, XXVII, 533-4.

forth to avenge his father, and Fulvie prepares to die under the walls of the city.

Pradon confesses in the preface to his play that Fulvie is his own invention, and that in order to preserve the unities of time and place he has altered some of the circumstances of history and placed the scene in the Roman camp before Carthage and not in Rome. In all of these variations from the classical accounts Crowne has followed his French model.⁸⁷⁵ In both plays Fulvia is the daughter of Metellus and beloved by Regulus. In both she has presentiments of disaster concerning her hero, and refuses his wish that she seek safety at Clypea during the battle. After the capture of Regulus, Crowne follows his model in keeping the news from Fulvia, and again upon the consul's return, in bringing her before him to make a final fruitless appeal. Pradon's Fulvie at the end expresses a desire to bury herself beneath the walls of Carthage, but Crowne's Fulvia leads the army to the rescue of her beloved, and goes mad when he expires from his torture before her eyes. The characters of Regulus and Metellus the English playwright also borrowed with slight variations from his French model. Regulus is still the heroic general who will enter battle in spite of unfavorable omens. Upon his capture and return he shows the same heroic determination to sacrifice himself, and assumes the same attitude towards Fulvia and the opposition of the army. As in the French play, Metellus upholds Regulus in his patriotic duty, and thwarts the army by a trick. The Lepide of Pradon is the tutor of young Attilius, but Crowne eliminates the son of Regulus and makes Lepidus do duty both for Priscus, as a commander who opposes the consul's sacrifice, and for Lepide as the inspirer of the army's opposition to it.⁸⁷⁶

The chief variation which Crowne has made from his original is found in his treatment of Mannius. In the French play Mannius appears as a jealous rival of Regulus for the hand of Fulvie and his treachery is motivated by his desire to get rid of his opponent. Crowne, however, abandons this love element and introduces the treason of Mannius only in a dialogue between the Carthaginian characters.⁸⁷⁷ The conflict, which in Pradon's play is in part

⁸⁷⁵ *Les Oeuvres de Mr. Pradon*, Paris, 1688. *Regulus*, preface pp. 1 and 3.

⁸⁷⁶ Although detailed study of Crowne's borrowings is unnecessary to show his use of the French play, I subjoin a list of his Roman-camp scenes and the corresponding scenes from Pradon which he used. Crowne, Act II, 3 (IV, 155-163)—Pradon, Act I, 3; Act II, 1-4. Crowne, Act III, 3 (IV, 174-6)—Pradon, Act III, 1, 2, 4. Crowne, Act IV, 4 (IV, 193-97)—Pradon, Act IV, 3, 4, 5, 7. Crowne, Act V, 1 (IV, 197-205)—Pradon, Act V, 1, 3, 5, 8. Other scenes of Pradon contain material which Crowne utilizes but from these he borrows directly.

⁸⁷⁷ *Works*, IV, 149, 155, 166, 171.

between the rival suitors for Fulvie, becomes in the English play, solely a struggle between love and duty. Other changes of considerable importance which Crowne makes, are the elimination of young Attilius from the plot, and the introduction of the ghost of Apamia, the wife of Regulus. The ghost's first appearance is a clumsy effort to foreshadow disaster, while her second entrance causes Fulvia to swoon and allows Regulus to make a good exit.

In conformity to the practice of his contemporaries and to the demand of his public for dramas filled with action, Crowne does not, like Pradon, confine himself to the story of Regulus and Fulvia. On the contrary he devotes the larger half of his play to a presentation of Carthaginian turmoils connected with the war against the Roman consul. Of the characters here presented Xantippus is the only one whose part approximates historical fact. A very brief account of his services to Carthage may be found in Florus³⁷⁸ and in Cicero;³⁷⁹ but a more likely source of Crowne's information is the history of Polybius, who gives a somewhat detailed narrative of the battle in which Xantippus overcame Regulus.³⁸⁰ He also mentions the shadowy historical personages, Hasdrubal and Hamilcar, who were the unsuccessful leaders of the Carthaginians before the arrival of Xantippus. They are not to be identified with the more famous Hamilcar-Barca (father of Hannibal) and his son-in-law Hasdrubal.³⁸¹ According to Crowne's play, Xantippus returns to Sparta with his troops, but not until he has discovered a plot to sink him and his soldiers in rotten ships.³⁸² Polybius hints at such a plot but does not mention it. Appian, however, states that the Carthaginians, in order to rob Xantippus of the credit for victory over Regulus, pretended to honor him with gifts and sent galleys to convey him back to Lacedaemonia with instructions to throw him overboard. The Carthaginians obeyed their orders.³⁸³ This may have given Crowne his suggestion for the "rotten ships".

The under-plot of the English *Regulus*, so far as it concerns the rivalry of Asdrubal and Xantippus for the hand of Eliza, Hamilcar's daughter, and the aspirations of Asdrubal to make himself king in response to the solicitation of Gisgon, Hiarbas, and Batto, seems to be entirely Crowne's own invention. There are hints that the

³⁷⁸ L. Annaeus Florus, *Epitome Rerum Romanarum*, Lib. II, cap. 2.

³⁷⁹ Cicero, *De Officiis*, iii, 26-27.

³⁸⁰ Polybius, *Historiae*, Lib. I, cap. 29-36.

³⁸¹ It is possible, however, that the relation between this pair suggested to Crowne is the plot of Asdrubal and Xantippus as rivals for the hand of Eliza.

³⁸² *Works*, IV, 219.

³⁸³ Appian, *Punica*, 4.

plottings of Asdrubal and his followers were intended to suggest vaguely to the English audience their own political situation in 1692. This is especially true of the character of Hiarbas, the priest, who says on one occasion,

"The Romans are a godly nation,
And ours a vile; I, and more godly men
Have a design, by help of the good Romans,
To give bad Carthage a religious master,
That is this Prince. Though he was wild of late,
He's now reform'd, and is a heavenly man.
Help you to make him King, when he is King
You may be sure of a very rich reward."⁸⁸⁴

The tragedy of *Regulus*, unlike other plays of Crowne, contains an element of comedy in the prose scenes between Gisgon, Hiarbas, Batto, and Asdrubal. In this respect one may see, perhaps, the influence of Elizabethan drama.

I see no reason to dissent from Genest's critical opinion of the drama. He found it an "indifferent tragedy" with a story "barren of incident and not well calculated for the stage."⁸⁸⁵ The mediocrity of Pradon's play is carried over into the English drama, and the sub-plot which Crowne invented is lacking in vital interest. *Regulus* and Xantippus are drawn with heroic traits, but the playwright fails to make his audience feel their emotional intensity. He is more at home in the comic prose scenes where he holds a rich selfish senator, a luxury-loving priest and an unscrupulous merchant up to ridicule. One is not surprised that the English public of 1692 did not receive the play enthusiastically.

THE MARRIED BEAU

After the failure of *Regulus*, Crowne turned again to comedy. He seems to have been engaged on the composition of his next play, *The Married Beau*, throughout 1693, for in November of that year *The Gentleman's Journal* in discussing the productions promised for that theatrical season says, "We are also to have . . . a Comedy by Mr. Crown."⁸⁸⁶ This must refer to *The Married Beau*. The play was not acted, however, for several months. In the May number for 1694 the same periodical makes the following announcement: "We have had two new Comedies since my last; the first

⁸⁸⁴ *Works*, IV, 154.

⁸⁸⁵ Genest, II, 20-22.

⁸⁸⁶ *The Gentleman's Journal*, November 1693, II, 374.

called *Have at all, or the Midnight Adventures*, by Mr. Joseph Williams; the other call'd *The Married beau, or the curious Impertinent*, by Mr. Crown, already acted many times."³⁸⁷ Inasmuch as each number of this miscellany appeared, according to the testimony of the editor, at the beginning of the following month,³⁸⁸ we may conclude that *The Married Beau* was first acted early in May, 1694. It seems to have been well received, since Motteux remarks that it had already been "acted many times" before his miscellany went to press. Henry Purcell, a noted composer of the time, added his skill to that of the dramatist by contributing an overture and eight tunes.³⁸⁹ The play was published in the Trinity term 1694.³⁹⁰

The plot of *The Married Beau* is as follows: Mr. Lovely, a newly married beau, considers himself very handsome and feeds upon flattery. He desires to be admired by all women and especially by his wife, and to test her regard for him he requests Mr. Polidor, his best friend, to attempt her virtue. Polidor is angered by the foolish request and complies with it, but with some compunctions, for he fears that Camilla, whom he loves, will hear of it and reject him. Lovely tells his wife that he has to sup at court and may be gone for a week on a country trip; and leaves her alone with Polidor, in spite of the latter's protests. At the first opportune moment Polidor solicits Mrs. Lovely, but she spurns him and reproves her gentlewoman for leaving her alone. Camilla comes to visit Mrs. Lovely just as she is about to send for her. She reveals Polidor's baseness, and Camilla checks her growing regard for him. Polidor, inflamed by Mrs. Lovely's beauty, finds her alone in Camilla's absence; and overcoming her weakening resistance, leads her off to a bed-chamber. Lionell, the maid, sees the exit and resolves to profit by it, but she inadvertently reveals her secret to the returning Camilla. Mrs. Lovely denies her guilt at first, but breaks down under Camilla's threats and becomes penitent.

Lovely, meantime, has learned by a letter from his wife of Polidor's first solicitation, and is satisfied with her behavior. He even upbraids Polidor with his failure. Later Lovely leaves on an errand for Camilla; and she, pretending to depart, spies upon Polidor as he again attempts to force Mrs. Lovely. Camilla appears opportunely and bitterly upbraids Polidor. Lionell reveals her

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, May, 1694, III, 134.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, June, 1693, II, 179.

³⁸⁹ Charles Burney, *A General History of Music*, III, 478-79.

³⁹⁰ Arber, *Term Catalogue*, II, 511.

knowledge to Mrs. Lovely and forces her mistress to conceal Thorneback, her lover, in her own closet. His presence is discovered by Polidor, who thinks Mrs. Lovely false to him, and decides to betray her to her husband. This he does, but when Lovely first swears to murder her and later to leave her forever, Polidor repents and devises a scheme to reassure him. He pretends to desire an opportunity to cuckold his foolish friend. Lovely consents but will witness the deed. Meanwhile, the repentant Polidor informs Mrs. Lovely through Lionell of his scheme to deceive Lovely into thinking her chaste. Thus by prearrangement Polidor solicits Mrs. Lovely and she indignantly spurns him, while her husband secretly looks on with great satisfaction. Lovely is so grateful that he promises to assist Polidor in winning back the affection of Camilla. That saintly lady coldly rejects Polidor until he pleads that only by marrying him can she reform him.

An under-plot concerns the successful efforts of Lionell, Mrs. Lovely's maid, to entice Thorneback, an elderly spark, into the entanglements of matrimony. It also contains the attempts of the hesitant young Sir John Shittlecock to court Mrs. Lovely, Camilla, Lionell, and Cecilia in turn. He finally succeeds in winning Mrs. Lovely's foolish young sister.

Crowne made no effort to conceal the source of his plot; on the contrary he indicated it by his secondary title, *The Curious Impertinent*. This famous novel from *Don Quixote* had already been several times utilized in the course of the seventeenth century.³⁹¹ Even before the publication of Thomas Shelton's English translation in 1612, an unknown playwright had used the Spanish story for the minor plot of a play now known as *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* (licensed 1611). This subordinate plot varies little from *El Curioso Impertinente* except in the catastrophe.³⁹² Shortly after,³⁹³ the same story was utilized by Nathaniel Field for the sub-plot of

³⁹¹ E. Koppel, *Don Quixote, Sancho Pansa und Dulcinea in der englischen Literatur bis zur Restauration*, Herrigs Archiv, CI, 98, says that there were six or seven plays with the Curious-Impertinent motive in the English drama of the seventeenth century.

³⁹² A. S. W. Rosenbach, *The Curious-Impertinent in English Dramatic Literature before Shelton's Translation of Don Quixote*, *Modern Language Notes*, XVII, 357-67. *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* may be found in Dodsley's *Old English Plays*, 4th ed., X, 381-468.

³⁹³ A. W. Ward, *History of English Dramatic Literature*, II, 683 suggests that Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Coxcomb* (performed 1612) is indebted for one of its plots to the Curious-Impertinent story, but I agree with Rosenbach (see note 392 above) that had Beaumont and Fletcher used Cervantes' story, they would have borrowed more directly from it. It has also been suggested that Robert Davenport's *The City Night-Cap* (1624) is from the Spanish story, but A. H. Bullen, *The Works of Robt. Davenport*, London, 1890, pp. xii, 94 note, has proved that he was indebted to Robt. Greene's *Philomela* (1592). In the Restoration period Mrs. Behn's *The Amorous Prince* (1671) has been thought to owe something to Cervantes, but Summers, *The Works of Aphra Behn*, IV, 119-20, has pointed out that Mrs. Behn has borrowed rather from Davenport's play.

Amends for Ladies (published 1618, but acted earlier).³⁹⁴ Among the Restoration plays before the time of Crowne's *Married Beau*, Thomas Southerne's *The Disappointment, or The Mother in Fashion* (1684) makes use of Cervantes' novel.³⁹⁵

Crowne was not indebted to any of these dramatizations of *El Curioso Impertinente*, but went directly to the original. Whether he read the Spanish text or Shelton's translation, it is impossible to determine, but his adaptation of Moreto's *No Puede Ser* proves that he was not ignorant of the language. Let us now examine his use of his source.³⁹⁶

In its external aspects the plot of *The Married Beau* follows that of Cervantes' novel rather closely. "The Two Friends" of the Spanish story, Anselmo and Lothario, correspond to Lovely and Polidor. Like Anselmo, Lovely is recently and happily married, and desires to test his wife by means of his best friend. Anselmo attributes his motive to an irrational disease of which he can be cured only by satisfying himself of the unchanging virtue of his wife Camilla. Here Crowne introduces his first important change by making Lovely desire the trial merely to satisfy his own vanity. The attitude of Lothario and Polidor to the proposal is also different. The former seeks to dissuade his friend by lengthy arguments, and undertakes the disagreeable task only when Anselmo determines to seek another for the office unless he consents. Polidor is annoyed by Lovely's foolish proposal, and suspecting a trick, angrily complies.³⁹⁷ There is a further difference between Polidor and Lothario. The latter's friendship for Anselmo is true, but Polidor recognizes in Lovely his real foppish, affected character, and is disgusted. He is therefore at no such pains as Lothario to deter his friend from his hazardous plan. The first efforts of Lothario to deceive Anselmo without complying are omitted by Crowne.

In the seduction scenes Crowne again follows his original rather closely. Polidor's first attempt to solicit Mrs. Lovely meets with the same rebuff as Lothario's effort to seduce Camilla. In each case the wife has recourse to the presence of her waiting woman to protect her, and each addresses a letter to her absent husband complaining of her treatment.³⁹⁸ Polidor's second and successful attempt on Mrs. Lovely's virtue follows closely Lothario's conquest of

³⁹⁴ Natl. Field, *Amends for Ladies*, Dodsley, XI, 87-172.

³⁹⁵ *The Works of Thomas Southerne*, London, 1713, 73-152.

³⁹⁶ My account follows that of Grosse, pp. 74-79, in the main.

³⁹⁷ *Works*, IV, 247—*Don Quixote*, Bk. IV, ch. 6, Shelton's translation, London, pp. 326-27.

³⁹⁸ *Works*, IV, 264-67—*Don Quixote*, Bk. IV, ch. 6, I, 332-34.

the yielding Camilla.³⁹⁹ In each case the seducer is inflamed by the beauty of the wife and loses the restraint which hitherto has marked his actions. In each, likewise, the waiting-woman becomes cognizant of the fall of her mistress. At this point Crowne adds a new element by letting the saintly Camilla into the secret for the purpose of reforming the fallen wife.

The return of Lovely, like that of Anselmo, is marked by the concealment of the wife's fall; but from this point Crowne takes more freedom with his material. Henceforth there is a divergence between the actions of the wife Camilla, and those of Mrs. Lovely. Mrs. Lovely's saintly friend saves her from being overcome a second time, and thereafter she sins no more. Anselmo's wife, however, continues her illicit relations with Lothario. Lionell now for the first time begins to play the role of Leonila, and making capital of her secret knowledge of Mrs. Lovely's guilt, imposes on her mistress the task of concealing Thorneback in her closet. In the resulting complication Crowne again follows Cervantes. Polidor, discovering Thorneback, thinks Mrs. Lovely false to him, just as Lothario, seeing Leonela's lover escaping from an upper chamber window, suspects Camilla. The upshot is the same in both cases. Polidor, like Lothario, tells the husband that his wife is not all that she should be, and proposes a demonstration, with the husband as a secret witness.⁴⁰⁰ Both Polidor and Lothario soon regret their hasty disclosures and acquaint the wives with what they have done. There is considerable variation in what immediately follows. In Crowne's play the repentant Polidor gives the reformed Mrs. Lovely an opportunity to deceive her husband and regain his affection. In Cervantes' story, on the other hand, Camilla's resourcefulness is responsible for the elaborate deception in which she threatens to kill Lothario and then herself, and vindicates her honor to the complete satisfaction of the eavesdropping Anselmo.⁴⁰¹ The motive of Camilla and Lothario is to make their illicit relations more secure, while Crowne, on the contrary, utilizes the scene to provide a *dénouement* for a plot which logically should lead to a catastrophe, as it does in the Spanish novel.

Although, as we have just seen, Crowne follows the Spanish plot rather closely except for his alteration of the catastrophe, this is far from being the case with respect to the characters. The ex-

³⁹⁹ *Works*, IV, 285-89.—*Don Quixote*, Bk. IV, ch. 6, I, 335-36.

⁴⁰⁰ *Works*, IV, 312-17.—*Don Quixote*, Bk. IV, ch. 7, pp. 342-44.

⁴⁰¹ *Works*, IV, 323-24.—*Don Quixote*, Bk. IV, ch. 7, pp. 345-355.

ternal functions of Anselmo, Lothario, Camilla, and Leonila are taken over by Mr. Lovely, Polidor, Mrs. Lovely, and Lionell, but beyond this the differences are more striking than the similarities. Anselmo is a sincere but misguided person. Lovely on the other hand is an affected, foppish beau of the period. Equally noteworthy is the contrast between Camilla and Mrs. Lovely. The former becomes a victim in the first instance not through any defect in her character, but because of the novelty of the circumstances connected with the seduction. The latter, however, is something of a coquette and courts admiration too near the danger line. Yet she does not succumb without a struggle and is genuinely repentant. Polidor is closer to Lothario than Lovely or his wife to their prototypes. Lothario, however, is the nobler character, more true to himself and to his friend. Polidor is more like the Restoration comedy type which has its fling throughout the play and reforms in the last act. Lionell is much more vivacious and aggressive than the Leonila of Cervantes. In these respects she has taken on English characteristics.

To the four basic characters which the plot of Cervantes' story requires, Crowne joined a fifth, the virtuous and saintly maiden of small fortune, Camilla, who is made necessary by the transformation of Polidor into a respectable lover. Grosse compares her with Christina, heroine of *The Countrey Wit*, who also meets with infidelity in her lover, and who contrasts with the worldly, pleasure-seeking type of Restoration woman.⁴⁰² This type of virtuous young lady is not uncommon, however, in the comedies of the period. The minor plot of the play is the creation of Crowne except for the incident in which Thorneback, Lionell's lover, is introduced into Mrs. Lovely's closet to arouse Polidor's jealousy and suspicion. The characters of Thorneback, Shittlecock, and Cecilia are original with the English playwright.

Finally, there is one slight borrowing from Molière. The scene in which Thorneback courts Mrs. Lovely by singing a song of his own making and by dancing for her, to the envy of Shittlecock, is reminiscent of the scene in *Les Précieuses Ridicules* in which Mascarille sings "Au Voleur" to Cathos and Magdelon.⁴⁰³ Crowne had already imitated this scene more closely in *Sir Courtly Nice*.⁴⁰⁴

The Married Beau is noteworthy among Crowne's plays as his last extant comedy, and as the play in which in some respects, he

⁴⁰² Grosse, p. 80.

⁴⁰³ *Works*, IV, 272-74.—Molière, *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, sc. IX.

⁴⁰⁴ *Works*, III, 340-42.

shows himself at his best. In his transformation of Anselmo, Camilla, and Lothario into Lovely, Mrs. Lovely, and Polidor, the playwright created real English characters with thoroughly individualized traits. The motivation for the testing of the wife, which is lacking in Cervantes' story, Crowne provides in the vanity of Lovely. If there is less of a struggle in the mind of Polidor between his duty and his pleasure than in that of Lothario, it is because the former has become a genuine Restoration type with only a weak conscience in his make-up. On the other hand Mrs. Lovely reveals a greater inner struggle than is the case with Cervantes' Camilla. The character of Lionell is also an advance over the Leonila of the original. Her lover, who is a shadowy personage in the *Curious-Impertinent*, Crowne recreates as the middle-aged Squire Thorneback, a true Restoration social product. One feels that Crowne had little sympathy for his saintly Camilla, whom he added as a reforming agency. She is less interesting and less clearly developed than Mrs. Lovely. Of the other characters which Crowne created, Shittlecock, the amorous young knight, and Cecilia, Mrs. Lovely's foolish young sister, are on a distinctly lower plane. Shittlecock is a purely farcical type. His lack of determination and his amorous disposition are both displayed with great extravagance. Cecilia is the least individualized of all the characters in the play.

The use of blank verse in *The Married Beau* is a departure from the current practice in realistic comedy, which since the time of Etherege's *She Would if She Could* had been almost exclusively in prose. The easy, flowing blank verse which Crowne used, with its large number of feminine endings, probably harks back, as Dr. Ward has suggested,⁴⁰⁵ to the comedies of Fletcher and Shirley; but it is not unique even in the realistic comedy of the Restoration period. Mrs. Behn in *The City Heiress* (1682) wrote a considerable part of her play in the same fluent form.⁴⁰⁶ Without belittling the excellence of Crowne's blank verse in *The Married Beau*, I cannot agree with Schlegel,⁴⁰⁷ to whose opinion Grosse subscribes,⁴⁰⁸ that the realistic prose comedies lacked grace of form. So far from being the case, that same sparkling prose dialogue is one of the recognized excellencies of the plays of Etherege and Congreve.

Crowne is at some pains to defend the morality of his drama

⁴⁰⁵ A. W. Ward, *op. cit.*, III, 407.

⁴⁰⁶ *The Works of Aphra Behn*, II.

⁴⁰⁷ A. W. Schlegel, *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Litteratur, Sämmtliche Werke*, Leipzig, 1846, VI, 362-3.

⁴⁰⁸ Grosse, p. 83.

in his epistle to the reader. "In this play," he says, "a lady's virtue is vanish'd by temptation, and she is led out to be debauch'd, and, not long after, returns and confesses her sin: This offends some ladies, but 'tis hard to know which offends them, the sin or the confession, the latter example perhaps they like worst. If the sin be the offence, the ladies have led my muse astray, by going so often to see the same assaults and conquests more grossly represented in other plays." He then resorts to Scripture for a defence of his adulteress.⁴⁰⁹ I agree with Grosse that the seduction of Mrs. Lovely does not stamp the play as immoral; she is the victim of the novelty of circumstances. And yet the dénouement does not weigh well in the scale of morality. The deception of Lovely, the reinstatement of Mrs. Lovely into her former place in his affections, and the reformation of Polidor, do not constitute the logical consequences which should grow out of the action of the play.

CALIGULA

After the success of *The Married Beau* several years elapsed before Crowne again came forward with a new play. The reason for his long silence he explains in his epistle to the reader: "I have for some few years been disorder'd with a distemper which seated itself in my head, threatned me with epilepsy, and frequently took from me not only all sense, but almost all signs of life, and in my intervals, I wrote this play."⁴¹⁰ The rimed tragedy of *Caligula*, Crowne's last extant drama, was produced in all likelihood about the middle of March, 1698, since in *The Post Boy* for April 2nd to 5th of that year appears the following advertisement: "This Day is published the last new Tragedy, called *Caligula*, Emperor of Rome, as it is Acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane."⁴¹¹ Play-books were generally published at this time within a fortnight after the première of the play.⁴¹² We may infer that *Caligula* was not very successful from the fact that its author feels called upon to defend it. He says, to be sure, that many people of quality were pleased, but if the play had been really popular, we may feel sure that he would have said so.

⁴⁰⁹ *Works*, IV, 238.

⁴¹⁰ *Works*, IV, 352.

⁴¹¹ *The Post Boy* for April 2-5, 1698. Arber, *Term Catalogue*, III, 65, states that it was published in the Easter term, 1698. Genest, II, 143, says the play seems to have been published without the *dramatis personae*, but as Maidment and Logan have pointed out, this is a mistake. The quarto in the Harvard College Library which I have used certainly contains a list of characters and actors.

⁴¹² George Farquhar, edited by Wm. Archer, Mermaid ed., introd. p. 5, note.

The plot of *Caligula* may be stated briefly as follows: Caligula, the Roman emperor, considers himself a god, and regards only his own glory and pleasure. To this end he takes to himself the honors which his generals win in the field, and keeps the senate servile in Rome by a tyrannical use of his power over life and death. In his personal behavior he is luxurious in the extreme, prostituting whatever beauty attracts his eye and dishonoring even his own sisters. His empress, the wanton Cesonias, loves him to distraction, and uses all her arts to keep him to herself. Among his generals Vitellius is basely subservient, while Valerius is proud and honorable; and though loyal, dares to oppose Caligula's tyrannical actions. Cassius, the tribune, a worthy man with a failing for women, is made the instrument of Caligula's oppressions, and dares to murmur. For this he is imprisoned.

The brave Valerius has a beautiful wife, Julia, whom he has kept at his country estate secluded from the lust of Caligula; but disliking the solitude, she disobeys his orders and comes to Rome. He impresses her with the licentious nature of Caligula, and conjures her to return; but ere she can obey, Caesar spies her and bids Vitellius seize her and bring her to him. In spite of her prayers he carries her off to ravish her. Cesonias, fresh from the bath, prepares to entertain Caligula, but rages when she learns of another woman. Caesar appeases her. Julia returns with her shame to Valerius, who swears revenge. The violated wife poisons herself and dies in her husband's embrace.

Meanwhile Caligula condemns the Jews to die for failure to worship him, and seizes old Pastor as hostage for his son Lepidus, who has defied custom and married Salome, a Jewess and daughter of Philo. Lepidus gives himself up to save his father. But foreshadowings of Caligula's death are at hand. He frees the imprisoned Cassius and orders him to work wholesale executions to terrify upstart rebellion. Instead, Cassius and his followers fall upon Caligula and kill him. Valerius arrives with soldiers for the same purpose, and Caesar dies at his feet. The imprisoned Jews are freed, and Lepidus is reunited to Salome. Valerius intends to restore the senate to its rights, and to retire to mourn for Julia.

Concerning the sources of *Caligula* the editors of the *Biographia Dramatica* state that the plot is taken from Suetonius' life of Caligula.⁴¹⁸ In part they are correct. Maidment and Logan, following

⁴¹⁸ *Biographia Dramatica*, II, 77.

their lead, recognized the borrowings from Suetonius, but added that "Valerius Asiaticus, his wife Julia, Philo, Pastor, Lepidus, and Salome are indebted to Crowne for their ephemeral existence."⁴¹⁴ Of the characters here listed Philo was in fact a noted Jewish philosopher, Valerius Asiaticus was twice a Roman consul, and his wife—whatever her name—was a victim of Caligula's lust. Crowne himself says, "I have put little more into the play than what I have found taken out of history. All of the characters and most of the events in the play I have taken out of history."⁴¹⁵ Although the veracity of our author's prefatorial statements is sometimes open to question, in this instance he was nearer the truth than has been suspected. A careful search indicates that Salome, Pastor, and Lepidus are the only fictitious characters among the persons represented.

The chief source of Crowne's material so far as it concerns Caligula and his wife Cesonia is Suetonius' life of Caligula.⁴¹⁶ Here the dramatist met with a detailed portrayal of the young emperor who violated his own sister and the wives of many of the principal citizens of Rome, and who was constant only to Cesonia, a woman in the youthful bloom of life, but lascivious and of insatiable lust. Here also Crowne found mention of Caligula's scattering money among the plebeians, of his preparations for a military triumph that was barren of achievement, and of his complaints against the senate for not offering him that honor, after he had warned them that he was above their honoring. In Suetonius's account, moreover, appear the signs presaging Caligula's death, and the setting of a theatrical spectacle which the dramatist utilized in the play. The rôle of Cassius Chaerea is drawn from this source also. According to Suetonius Caligula flouted Cassius as a wanton and effeminate person, and when the latter came to him for a watchword, was accustomed to give him 'Priapus' in contempt. Yet Cassius it was who led the conspirators against him. According to the Latin historian, Caesonia was killed when Caligula was murdered, but Crowne saw fit to vary from his source here.⁴¹⁷ The contemptible character of Vitellius, whose adulation of Caligula Crowne had occasion to defend on historical grounds in his epistle to the reader,⁴¹⁸ is taken from Suetonius' life of the emperor Aulus Vitellius.⁴¹⁹ As Crowne

⁴¹⁴ Maidment and Logan, *Works*, IV, 340.

⁴¹⁵ *Works*, IV, 351-52.

⁴¹⁶ C. Suetonius, *Duodecim Caesares*, edited by C. B. Hase, Paris, 1828, II, 1-74.

⁴¹⁷ The chapters of Suetonius' *Caligula* which provided Crowne with details for his play are as follows: 22, 24-26, 30, 36-37, 43-50, 54, 56-59.

⁴¹⁸ *Works*, IV, 352.

⁴¹⁹ Suetonius, *Duodecim Caesares*, Aulus Vitellius, §2.

says, the episode in which Vitellius begs a slipper of Cesonia, which he kisses and carries in his bosom,⁴²⁰ is historical except that the compliment was paid to Messalina, the wife of the emperor Claudius. Crowne may be indebted likewise to Dio Cassius's account of Vitellius.⁴²¹ According to this author Vitellius escaped death by falling at Caligula's feet where he showed great adulation, calling him divine and worshipping him. By this he won the emperor's good will and later surpassed all the others in servile flattery. To Suetonius Crowne is indebted for one other character, Annius Minutianus, "a noble Roman, married to one of the emperor's sisters." Annius is a minor character, but he has a grievance. After having married Caligula's sister, he is forced to witness her violation by the brother on the wedding night.⁴²² Such was the fate of Cassius Longinus who married Caligula's sister Drusilla.⁴²³

The slight plot of *Caligula* is concerned principally with the relations between Valerius Asiaticus and the emperor, and the latter's violation of Julia, the wife of Valerius. Suetonius is completely silent concerning Valerius, but Dio Cassius records that after the murder of Caligula when the pretorian guard was in confusion, he mounted to a conspicuous place and cried out, "I only wish I had killed him!"⁴²⁴ Valerius was then an ex-consul. Crowne may well have seen this and wondered at the reason lying behind the remark. Seneca in his *De Constantia* supplies the answer:⁴²⁵

"Amongst his [Caligula's] especial friends, was Valerius Asiaticus, a man of a fierce mind who could scarcely digest those contumelies that were offered to a stranger. To this man did he object at a banquet, and afterwards in a loud voice in an open assembly, the motions and fashions of his wife at such times as he accompanied and lay with her. Good gods! that the husband should hear this, and the Prince should know it, and that liberty of speech was so unbridled that he should discover, (I say not one that had been consul, I say not to his friend, but to her own husband) the adulteries of his wife and how her lusts were fashioned."⁴²⁶

We cannot be sure that this is the suggestion from which Crowne developed his Valerius, but it might well have been his starting point. Crowne's Julia does not seem to correspond to the violated

⁴²⁰ *Works*, IV, 366.

⁴²¹ Dio Cassius, *Historiae Romanae*, Lib. 59, §27.

⁴²² *Works*, IV, 362.

⁴²³ Suetonius, *Caligula*, §24.

⁴²⁴ Dio Cassius, *Ibid.*, Lib. 59, §30.

⁴²⁵ Seneca, *De Constantia*, 18.

⁴²⁶ The translations here quoted is that of Thomas Lodge, *The Works of Lucius Annaeus Seneca*, London, 1620, pp. 672-73.

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In outward form, *Caligula* is a curious reversion to the rimed heroic play, the vogue of which had ended twenty years before; but as a matter of fact, as Mr. George B. Dutton has pointed out, it is not an heroic drama in spite of its couplets.⁴⁸² It still remains a mystery why Crowne should choose to write in couplets, since he must have been conscious that he was more at home in blank verse. In any case we must consider his choice ill-advised, since his couplets in this play are not superior to his previous efforts in this medium. In spirit and subject matter *Caligula* is akin to the Fletcherian type of tragedy, and is especially reminiscent of *Valentinian*. In its observation of the unities and in general structure, however, it is much more "classical" than *Regulus*, which, as we have seen, admits semi-comic characters in a prose under-plot and thus is reminiscent of the Elizabethan practice. From the standpoint of plot *Caligula* is, as Crowne himself admits, deficient. The first three acts are almost barren of action, and while they reveal Caligula in such a light that we are prepared for the violation of Julia—the central action of the play—they have nothing to make them intrinsically interesting. Historically Crowne was justified in having Cassius kill the emperor, but from the point of view of dramatic effect, one readily agrees with Maidment and Logan that it would have been better if Valerius had done the deed in revenge for the violation of his wife. The dialogue has frequently the same argumentative tone which is objectionable in Dryden's heroic plays.

Among the *dramatis personae*, Caligula, the monster of vicious appetites, is clearly portrayed. Crowne did little more, however, than to adopt the characteristics which he found in his sources. The Empress Cesonia is depicted as a voluptuous, passionate woman, but appears in a more favorable light than in Suetonius. The trick of character-contrast which Crowne had learned from Molière, he employs with good effect in this play. The upright, valiant Valerius, with his record of military achievements, contrasts with the emperor, who blusters about triumphs but deserves none. Again, the independent, critical attitude which Valerius assumes is placed in opposition to the debasing adulation of Vitellius. Cesonia and Julia are also clearly distinguished; the one is wanton, while the other is so chaste that she suffers death to remove her shame.

⁴⁸² Geo. B. Dutton, *Theory and Practice in English Tragedy 1650-1700*, *Englische Studien*, Band XLIX, 1916, p. 212.

JUSTICE BUSY

Crowne's last play was a comedy entitled *Justice Busy, or The Gentleman Quack*. Of all his dramatic productions it alone was never printed. Our only real source of information concerning it is Downes, who lists it among the principal new plays given from 1695 until 1704 in the following words: "*Justice Busy*, a Comedy wrote by Mr. Crowne; 'twas well Acted, yet prov'd not a living Play: However Mrs. Bracegirdle, by a Potent and Magnetick Charm in performing a Song in't, caused *the Stones of the Streets to fly in the Men's Faces*."⁴³³ Halliwell-Phillipps states that the songs introduced into it were published separately with the music, and it is likely that this publication is the source of his knowledge that the secondary title is *The Gentleman Quack*.⁴³⁴ The play was performed at the Little Lincoln's-Inn-Fields theatre, whither Betterton, Mrs. Barry, and Mrs. Bracegirdle had gone after their disagreement with the united company at Drury Lane. Halliwell-Phillipps is of the opinion that *Justice Busy* was acted in 1699, but from an examination of the list of new plays which Downes gives from 1695 until 1704, I am inclined to think that 1700 is a more likely date. My reason is this. In the eighteen plays which Downes lists, there is an apparent attempt to indicate a rough chronological sequence.⁴³⁵ Among the first nine there are several exceptions to this order, but among the last nine, if we include *Justice Busy*, the chronological sequence is maintained. The play immediately preceding Crowne's comedy in the list is Southerne's *Fate of Capua*, produced in 1700, and the two plays immediately following (Congreve's *Way of the World* and Rowe's *Ambitious Stepmother*) were both played in that same year. For this reason it seems to me that the slight evidence which we have points to 1700 as the date of the play.

⁴³³ *Roscarius Anglicanus*, p. 45.

⁴³⁴ Halliwell, *A Dictionary of Old English Plays*, p. 136.

⁴³⁵ I have used Genest's dates in the main in checking up this list.

CHAPTER III

CRITICAL SUMMARY

I. THE TRAGEDIES

The historians of English literature have usually classified John Crowne as a writer of dull tragedies, and it is significant that he gained his first success as a playwright in heroic drama. When he began to write for the theatre, Dryden's *Conquest of Granada* (1669-70) had just been greeted with wild applause, and Settle's *Empress of Morocco* (1669) had been acted before the king at Whitehall and was about to be played on the public stage. It was natural, therefore, that Crowne should turn to the heroic drama for one of his first efforts, *The History of Charles the Eighth of France* (1671). Here he allowed free play to the romantic tendencies which he had shown in *Pandion and Amphigeneia* and *Juliana*. Thus he was able to make heroic characters out of such ordinary historical figures as Charles VIII and young King Ferdinand of Naples. In common with their heroic brethren, they have exaggerated ideas of conduct and artificially stimulated emotions; and like Almanzor, they unpack their hearts in words. The heroines, Julia and Cornelia, whose love the young kings seek, are typical heroic women, mere stage puppets, which the playwright uses as occasion demands. The background of the action is made up of the customary scenes of war and conquest. *Charles the Eighth* was probably acted very shortly before the appearance of *The Rehearsal* in December, 1671, but Crowne was too much a new-comer in the theatre to receive attention from the satirists. Yet in his dedication to the play (published in 1672) he says, "The enemies which it has already met with have been fewer than a play in verse (and an ill one too) could expect; considering how many there are, that exclaim against rhyme, though never so well writ."¹ Although the couplets in Crowne's first heroic play are as good as Settle's in *The Empress of Morocco*, they are of a very mediocre quality.

Three years later, in 1675, Crowne himself joined with other writers of the day in satirizing the heroic drama. In an entertaining scene of *The Country Wit*, Sir Mannerly Shallow, a pompous

¹ *Works*, I, 127.

country poltroon, and his man Booby (whose name characterizes him) show enthusiastic appreciation of the heroical qualities:

"Sir Man. Oh, I have all the new comedy books, and tragedy books sent me, as fast as ever they are made. Oh, I love them that huff the gods, they make no more of a god than we do of a constable.

Boo. Your Worship and I acted a tragedy book, you know.

Sir Man. Yes, and I was a hero, and I remember two of the bravest lines.

If saucy Jove my enemy appears,

I'll pull him out o' heaven by the ears.

There's ramping for you.

Lady Fad. Saucy Jove! that's very great! that took mightily here . . .

Lady Fad. Oh, they have a brave ingenious way of writing now.

Sir Man. Oh, but then the fine tender things that make you cry. You must know, aunt, my part was to be in love with my dairy-maid, and her name was Celemena, and mine was Philaster, and I cried

How does my fairest Celemena do?

and she cried

Thank you my dear Philaster, how do you?

Lady Fad. Very natural and soft.

Boo. Oh, the dairy-maid is very soft.

Sir Man. Oh, but the two next are tender. I cried

Does my sweetheart me any kindness bear?

And she cried

I love you dearly, now, I vow and swear . . .

Sir Man. And then they have the finest, odd out of the way of similes, similes that are most commonly no similes at all, as now, speaking of a lady's bright eyes, one says

How do the nimble glories of her eye,

Frisk and curvett, and swiftly gallop by?

There's a fine comparison, to compare a lady's eye to a horse.

Lady Fad. Ay, and nimble is a fine odd, out of the way epithet for glories, nimble glories. Well, dear chuck, how camest thou by this admirable and, as I may say, nimble knowledge? . . .²

² *Works*, III, 82-85.

In spite of this sensible satire upon the most vulnerable aspects of the heroic drama, Crowne came forward with the heroic two-part play, *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, in 1677. Dryden had announced his intention of abandoning rime in the prologue to *Aureng-Zebe* (1675), and even Crowne was conscious of the growing hostility to the form, for in the epilogue to Part I he writes,

"First for his rhyme he pardon does implore,
And promises to ring those chimes no more."³

Some of the very defects which he satirized in *The Countrey Wit* are painfully evident in the new play. Phraartes is not so consummate a ranter as Almanzor, but he rivals the ludicrous lines quoted by Sir Mannerly—

"If saucy Jove my enemy appears,
I'll pull him out o' heaven by the ears"—

when, upon the death of Clarona, he exclaims,

"Where is Clarona gone?
Aloft!—I see her mounting to the sun!—
The flaming Satyr towards her does roll,
His scorching lust makes summer at the Pole.
Let the hot planet touch her if he dares—
Touch her, and I will cut him into stars,
And the bright chips into the ocean throw!"⁴

Dialogue of an argumentative nature, which is a noticeable blemish in Dryden's heroic plays, is also found to a distressing degree in *The Destruction of Jerusalem*. Titus and Berenice dispute concerning love and duty and Phraartes debates with Clarona on religious matters. Here again, as in *Charles the Eighth*, the background of the action is war and conquest, but to that is added the civil strife of the Jews. The two parts of *The Destruction of Jerusalem* deserved greater success than *Charles the Eighth*, but the wild applause with which they were greeted puzzles the modern critic. The couplets are mediocre, the characterization is artificial, and the emotion is forced. Both the parts of the play, especially the second, afford opportunities for elaborate scenic effects, such as the burning of the temple, and to these must have been due in large measure the phenomenal success of the piece.

The reaction against the heroic drama which we have already noted, led playwrights to abandon couplets for blank verse and to

³ *Works*, II, 311.

⁴ *Works*, II, 383.

forward with *Darius* in 1688, after a long illness, he wrote that he was aware of the taste of the age for comedy, but that his gloomy spirit forced tragedy upon him. In the number of good lines and passages which it contains *Darius* ranks first among Crowne's tragedies. On the other hand, the character of the Persian king is not well suited for dramatic presentation, and Lee had already developed the tragic possibilities of his family in *The Rival Queens* (1677). The fate of Darius should arouse our pity, but in spite of some good delineation, Crowne's character does not get from us the sympathy which we feel for Antigone and Philisthenes. The management of the sub-plot, a triangular love episode between Bessus, his young wife Barzana, and his bastard son Memnon, gives proof of Crowne's skill as an adapter. He borrowed the entanglement from the *Hippolytus* of Euripides and thus filled out the undramatic story of Darius. Aside from Darius, Barzana is the best delineated character in the play. The tragic difficulties of her passion for her husband's son are well brought out.

Crowne's *Regulus* (1692) illustrates the conflicting forces which are present in his later tragedies. The major plot is derived from the *Regulus* of Nicolas Pradon, a minor French playwright of the neo-classical school. Pradon deviated from the historical accounts of *Regulus* in order to preserve the unities. Crowne in turn follows Pradon's changes, but casts the unities to the winds and lays about half of his scenes in Carthage. He is further at variance with the "classical" spirit in the introduction of the ghost of Apamia, and in the use of comic prose scenes to develop the minor characters. These elements, which violate so-called decorum, are due to Elizabethan influence. The theme of the play is a conflict between love and duty in which duty wins. In the heroic drama love is the victor in such struggles; yet *Regulus* is in many respects an heroic character. He has much to say about his duty and the glory of dying for Rome, but he is an artificial creation and fails to win our sympathy. A like criticism applies to Fulvia, who in her arguments with *Regulus* resembles Berenice in *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, Part II.

In his last tragedy, *Caligula* (1698), Crowne largely abandoned earlier English tradition and developed a drama more akin to French classical tragedy. In the thinness of the plot and the lack of action he ran counter to English taste, and he felt obliged to defend himself in his epistle to the reader. He says that he developed history as he

found it, but we have seen that in *Darius*, for example, he did not hesitate to add another plot to suit his needs. There are other indications, also, that Crowne was conscious of the growing "classical" tendency in literary circles. He observes the unities in *Caligula* and neglects the opportunity of introducing a ghost when his source clearly admits of one. In form Crowne's last tragedy is more or less of a curiosity. It is written in heroic couplets, and yet it cannot be classified as an heroic drama. Its central figure, the emperor, is anything but heroic, and Valerius Asiaticus, though he is of heroic stuff, is not the dominating force in the play. Furthermore, the licentiousness of an emperor is not an heroic theme. In subject matter and general treatment *Caligula* is much more akin to Fletcher's *Valentinian*, as Dutton has pointed out, than to the heroic drama.⁵

When we consider Crowne's tragedies as a group, several observations immediately suggest themselves. For the sources of his plots he was largely indebted to classical historians and dramatists. Five of his tragedies can be definitely traced to the ancients. Of these *The Destruction of Jerusalem* owes much to the *De Bello Judaico* of Josephus; *Thyestes* is built upon the framework of Seneca's play, with a suggestion from Sophocles' *Antigone*; *Darius* is derived from the history of Quintus Curtius and the *Hippolytus* of Euripides; *Regulus* is taken in part from Polybius and Appian; and finally *Caligula* is drawn in the main from Suetonius and Philo. Two of these dramas, however, owe more or less to French sources. In *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, Part II, Crowne was considerably influenced by Racine's *Bérénice*, and for *Regulus* he borrowed largely from a French tragedy by Pradon. The heroic drama, *Charles the Eighth*, is based on French history, but in this instance Crowne's immediate source seems to have been an English translation of Guiccardini's history. The plot of *The Ambitious Statesman* is probably fictitious, but in this case also the setting is French. Thus of Crowne's ten tragedies, only the Shakespearean adaptations are of English origin, and these retain so much from the older plays that they can hardly be classified with his original work.

For theatrical effects Crowne relied to a noticeable degree upon supernatural agencies, especially ghosts, of which we find specimens in seven of his tragedies. In *Charles the Eighth*, the ghost of John Galeazzo, the young Duke of Milan who was poisoned by his uncle

⁵ G. B. Dutton, *Theory and Practice in English Tragedy, 1650-1700*. *Engleche Studien*, XLIX, 212.

Lodovico, enters to warn Isabel of her approaching death. The tortured spirit of Herod appears in *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, Part I, when the Edomites are about to break into the city, and gloats over the destruction which is to follow. In *The Miseries of Civil-War*, Crowne introduces the spectre of Richard II to warn King Henry and to foreshadow his murder by Richard of Gloucester. In the later Shakespearean adaptation, *Henry the Sixth, the First Part*, the ghost of Duke Humphrey torments the villainous Cardinal, but here Crowne merely follows the older play. The ghost of Tantalus likewise appears in the prologue of Seneca's *Thyestes*, but Crowne changes the occasion for his entrance and makes him disturb the sleeping Atreus. At the close of *Darius*, the ghost of the murdered king appears "brightly habited," and smiles when he sees the bodies of his assassins "hung in chains, and stuck with darts." Finally, in *Regulus* Crowne brings in the ghost of Apamia, the wife of the Roman commander. She serves the mechanical purpose of warning Regulus not to risk battle, and later of causing Fulvia to swoon so that he can make a good exit. In *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, Part I, we meet with other manifestations of the supernatural. On the night of the storm, an aërial army appears in the heavens, a prophet cries woe to Jerusalem, and a mysterious voice is heard to say, "Let us depart!" To this array of theatrical agencies Crowne adds an angel, who declares that the doom of the city is foreordained. So persistent a use of unreal devices—ghosts, angels, aërial armies, and mysterious voices—is good evidence that Restoration audiences enjoyed these sensational effects.

In tragic characterization Crowne's powers are distinctly limited. He lacks, for example, Otway's ability to realize intense emotion in such characters as Belvidera, Jaffeir, and Monimia, and the sympathetic understanding with which Dryden reveals his Antony and Cleopatra. He can make his characters theatrically effective, but he seldom penetrates below the surface or makes any attempt to comprehend the motives of his men and women. Thus the Constable in *The Ambitious Statesman* and Atreus in *Thyestes* are good stage villains, but they are little more. In a few of his characters, however, Crowne approaches real artistic achievement. The lovers, Antigone and Philisthenes, are more real in their suffering than any other of his tragic pairs, and appeal strongly to our sympathies. Among his heroes the Duke of Vendosme is, in my opinion, most vividly characterized, perhaps because Crowne has inspired him with

something of his own philosophical inclinations and contempt for court life.

We may note, in taking leave of Crowne as a writer of tragedy, some of the opinions which have been held concerning his work in that field. Gosse characterizes him as "a dull writer, artificially stirred now and then for a moment into a coarse kind of stage animation."⁶ Richard Garnet finds the success of his heavy tragedies hard to understand, and adds, "The only one of Crowne's serious dramas entitled to much consideration is *Darius* where the poetry is frequently fine, but the characters are tame."⁷ A. T. Bartholomew says that "Crowne, so far as his tragedies are concerned, might be called a second-rate Lee. His plays have all of Lee's turgidity, with none of that author's redeeming though crazy picturesqueness. They present a dead level of mediocrity . . ."⁸ The most keenly critical judgment upon Crowne's tragedies, in my opinion, has been passed by Dr. A. W. Ward, who says: "As a writer of tragedy he holds a conspicuous place among the followers of several styles, for he can hardly be said to have a style of his own. Often happy in the choice and ingenious in the construction of his plots, he possesses a certain power of coarse but not ineffective characterization. But he entirely lacks not only refinement, but elevation of sentiment; and in beauty of form he cannot be said to approach Dryden."⁹ Gerald Langbaine, a contemporary of Crowne, regarded him as more fortunate in comedy than in tragedy,¹⁰ and this has been the general consensus of critical opinion since his time.

II. THE COMEDIES

Crowne's first acted play gave no definite indication that realistic comedy was to be the field of his most successful efforts. *Juliana* (1671) is a romantic comedy of the type which Dryden had developed in *The Rival Ladies* (1663). In fact, the two plays have many features in common. In each case the plot is partially motivated by disguisings; there is plentiful fighting, with the danger of a tragic outcome; and the action is delayed while a masque is performed. Furthermore, they are similar in form. Each is written mainly in blank verse, but there are some prose passages and a sprinkling of couplets. But in merit *Juliana* does not compare

⁶ Gosse, *A History of Eighteenth Century Literature*, p. 59.

⁷ Garnett, *The Age of Dryden*, pp. 114-115.

⁸ A. T. Bartholomew in *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, VIII, 189-190.

⁹ Ward, *op. cit.*, III, 399.

¹⁰ Langbaine, p. 90.

favorably to Dryden's play. It is an unpromising first effort. The exposition is not well managed and the plot is very confused. The characters, too, are but slightly individualized, except Paulina and the Landlord. Paulina holds our interest much better than Juliana, and the Landlord is significant as the first low-comedy figure which Crowne attempted. He is the elder brother of Sir Mannerly Shallow and Booby in *The Countrey Wit*, of the Ranters and Dullman in *The English Frier*, of Crafty in *City Politiques*, of Crack in *Sir Courtly Nice*, and of Shittlecock in *The Married Beau*. What success Juliana had on the stage, must have been due to his coarse buffoonery.

The so-called masque, *Calisto*, was Crowne's next dramatic production not serious in nature. Strictly speaking, we should not include it in a discussion of his comedies, since it does not belong to the *genre*; but Evelyn, who saw it at court, calls it a "comédie" as well as a pastoral,¹¹ and for convenience we shall consider it here. As we have seen above,¹² Crowne was commissioned to write a masque. In 1674, however, little knowledge remained of the form which Ben Jonson had developed. The result of Crowne's efforts was a bastard type. The allegorical prologue and various entries continue the masque tradition, but the story of Calisto is presented in a five-act play, similar in form to the regular drama. The piece is neo-classical in its use of a mythological theme and in the observation of the unities. Besides these elements, at the end of each act a little pastoral scene is represented, followed by entries and choruses. In view of this last feature Reyher and Miss Marks have classified it as a pastoral.¹³

Calisto shows Crowne's ingenuity as a plotter. By skilful addition and changes he has made an offensive myth into a play suitable, even in the opinion of John Evelyn, for young princesses and noblewomen to act. The literary merit of the piece is slight. The slender classical story demanded good lines to make it attractive, but Crowne had no great talent for writing good lines.

In 1675 Crowne turned his attention to the new prose comedy of the day, and began his career as a realistic comic dramatist. His first drama of this kind, *The Countrey Wit* (1675), has many features in common with the plays of Etherege and Wycherley, but it differs from them in containing a large amount of low comedy "al-

¹¹ *The Diary of John Evelyn*, op. cit., II, 305.

¹² See above, Chapter II, pp. 74-75.

¹³ P. Reyher, *Les Marques Anglaises*, p. 476; Jeannette Marks, *English Pastoral Drama*, p. 61.

most sunk to farce." Sir Mannerly Shallow and his man Booby are caricatures of country ignorance of city ways. Crowne exaggerates their blunders in order to produce farcical effects. Lady Faddle and Isabella are also somewhat overdrawn for the same purpose. Most of the other characters, however, are realistic types from London life. Sir Thomas Rash represents the hostility of the older generation to the free-and-easy morality of the young city rakes, of whom Ramble is an example. Lord Drybone is an elderly debauchee in contrast to Ramble, while Betty Frisque illustrates the type of gay adventuress then much in evidence. The heroine, Christina, unsullied by Restoration immorality, is an exceptional though by no means a unique figure.

Although the four remaining comedies of Crowne all contain a farcical element, in no case is it so largely developed as in *The Country Wit*. They conform more strictly to the type of realistic comedy which satirized the foibles of a limited group of court characters. Two of them, *City Politiques* and *The English Frier* are modified by political or religious motives.

City Politiques (1683) is a mordant satire upon the Whig faction; hence four of the major characters are impersonations of men of the day. They are sufficiently individualized for recognition, but certain traits of character are exaggerated as a means of ridicule. Thus the peculiarities of Bartoline's speech and the profanity of Dr. Panchy are emphasized to an undue extent. The rôle of Craffy is a caricature of an entire class—the whole group of Whig poets and pamphleteers. The non-political characters—Florio and Rosaura, Artall and Lucinda—are more realistic. Florio and Lucinda, like their prototypes Horner and Mrs. Pinchwife, in Wycherley's *Country Wife*, are true portraits from Restoration society, the one a confirmed rake, and the other an unsophisticated country girl who loses her naiveté rapidly enough. The wanton Rosaura mirrors the notoriously immoral women of the court, such as we meet in the memoir of Count Grammont.

The English Frier is colored primarily by a religious motive,—the satire of Catholic practices during the reign of James II,—but it is political as well in attacking the Tory parasites, such as Lord Stately, who submitted to priestly domination in order to retain positions of influence or to secure advancement. Father Finical is the only character in the play who is to be identified with an actual person, and in this case the probable identification is complicated by the

relation between the friar and the hypocritical Tartuffe. In any case there is more downright realism in the delineation of Finical than in the politically colored caricatures in *City Politiques*. Besides the friar, Crowne has given us excellent portraits from the time in the ceremonious Lord Stately, the coquette Laura, and the niggardly Lady Pinch-gut. The never failing farcical element appears in the characters of the Ranters and Dullman.

The two comedies which we have just considered are interesting from an historical point of view, but their political and religious coloring is a blemish from the literary point of view. Crowne's most artistic comedies are almost entirely free from partisan bias. In *Sir Courtly Nice*, unquestionably his best drama, two political characters still remain,—Hothead and Testimony, but these are impartial satires upon the extreme Tories and Whigs,—types which continued with only slight variations through many evolutions of English politics. Only one character in *Sir Courtly Nice* lacks convincing reality. The conduct of the wizard Crack is farcical, but as Dennis recognized, the Tarugo of Moreto's comedy is the center of all the intrigues, and Crowne could not omit him without offense to the king. The other characters which he borrowed from the Spanish play he was able to cast into realistic personages. Thus Leonora and Violante are well-drawn English young ladies, and Bellguard and Farewel have much more individuality than Don Pedro and Don Felix. The characterization of the fastidious fop, Sir Courtly Nice, however, shows Crowne at his best. He is Crowne's most enduring contribution to the galaxy of Restoration comic portraits, and was so regarded by his contemporaries. Dennis is effusive in his praise of the piece, but much that he says shows keen discrimination. "All that is of English Growth in *Sir Courtly Nice*," he writes, "is admirable; for tho' we find in it neither the fine Designing of Ben. Johnson; nor the general and masculine satire of Wycherly; nor that Grace, that Delicacy, nor that Courtly Air which make the Charms of Etherege; yet is the Dialogue so lively and so spirited, and so attractively diversified and adapted to the several characters; four of these Characters are so entirely new yet so general and so important, and are drawn so truly and so graphically, and oppos'd to each other, Surly to Sir Courtly and Hothead to Testimony, with such a strong and entire Opposition; . . . that tho' I have more than twenty times read over this charming Comedy, yet have I always read it, not only with Delight and Rapture. And 'tis my

opinion that the greatest Comic poet that ever liv'd in any Age, might have been proud to have been the Author of it."¹⁴

Crowne's last extant comedy, *The Married Beau* (1694) is also a work of considerable artistic merit. It is especially noteworthy for its form, affording a rare instance of Fletcherian blank verse in realistic comedy. Like *Sir Courtly Nice*, it is founded on a Spanish plot, but here again the characters are changed into English figures familiar to the Restoration public. Lovely is a vainglorious beau, his wife is a coquette, and Polidor is a rakish bachelor. Once more a farcical character intrudes in the person of Sir John Shittlecock. The uncompromising realism of the piece, perhaps more than anything else, caused it to be forgotten when the cynicism of that age gave way to the sentimentalism of the next.

One of the serious defects in Restoration comedy is the lack of unity in the action, and this fault Crowne shares with his fellow-craftsmen. In *The Countrey Wit* the action of the main plot develops very slowly, and is resolved not by any conflict of forces, but by the self-elimination of Sir Mannerly when he ignorantly marries the porter's daughter. Ramble is the only real link between the major and minor action. The sub-plot, adapted bodily from Molière, naturally shows swifter development and holds our interest much better. *City Politiques* is fashioned on the Jonsonese type of plot. The action moves forward by the series of tricks which Florio devises in order to win Rosaura. The political satire of the play is naturally evolved from these efforts, but at other times it runs its course independently. In his two comedies from Spanish sources Crowne achieved greater unity of plot, but both in *Sir Courtly Nice* and in *The Married Beau* he did not vary greatly from his originals, except as he changed the catastrophe of Cervantes' story in the second play. The plot of *The English Frier* is technically the most defective of any which Crowne invented. The main action, which is his own, is very thin and not well motivated. The sub-plot, though well adapted from Molière's *Tartuffe*, runs a separate course practically until the last act, when Sir Thomas Credulous and Lord Wiseman are brought together to provide the necessary contact. Like other comic poets of the day, Crowne lays the emphasis on delineation of character, and on the cleverness of individual scenes.

In accord with the current practice, Crowne chose his characters from a limited circle of London life. His rakes vary in degree from

¹⁴ Dennis, I, 52-53.

the gay intriguing Ramble, the jealous old Lord Drybone, and the obliging Polidor, to the confirmed debauchee, Florio. Over against this immoral class, Crowne balances a healthier type. Among the younger men Bellguard, Farewel, Wiseman, and Bellmour have a sane outlook, while the more mature Sir Thomas Credulous exposes the sensuality of Finical, and Sir Thomas Rash berates the licentiousness of city life. In *Sir Courtly Nice* and *Mr. Lovely*, Crowne lashes the fastidious, vainglorious coxcombs of the day, and in *Laura* and *Mrs. Lovely* he shows the weakness of the coquette and the danger which she risks of sullyng her honor. Even *Laura* and *Mrs. Lovely* are less characteristic of the cynical Restoration woman, however, than the amorous *Lady Faddle*, the wanton *Rosaura*, the niggardly *Lady Pinch-gut*, and the gay adventuress, *Betty Frisque*. On the whole, we find in Restoration comedy but few examples of women who do not reflect in some way a blasé attitude toward morality; yet Crowne presents two such characters. *Christina*, the heroine of *The Countrey Wit*, preserves her purity in an atmosphere of intrigue, and is sympathetically portrayed. In *The Married Beau* the saintly qualities of *Camilla* are emphasized, but her emotional coldness is contrasted unfavorably with the weakness of *Mrs. Lovely*, who falls and repents.

Since delineation of character was the chief point of emphasis in realistic comedy, Crowne expended his fund of originality on that aspect of his work and went to foreign sources for his plots as occasion required. For two of his comedies he was indebted to the Spanish. For the first, Charles II gave him Moreto's *No Puede Ser* and bade him make an English play from it. *Sir Courtly Nice* was the result. For *The Married Beau* he used Cervantes' famous story, *El Curioso Impertinente*. Yet in both instances Crowne showed his careful workmanship by adapting his plots and characters thoroughly to English conditions. The greatest single influence upon Crowne as a writer of comedy, however, came from Molière. The indebtedness of the more gifted playwrights (such as Etherege, Wycherley, and Congreve) to Molière has frequently been overestimated, but Crowne's debt is a very real one. His most obvious borrowings are in plots and characters. Thus the sub-plot of *The Countrey Wit* is taken almost bodily from *Le Sicilien*, and the rôle of *Father Finical* and the exposure of his hypocrisy, avarice, and sensuality owe much to *Tartuffe*. Certain of Crowne's characters also have prototypes in Molière's plays. *Lady Pinch-gut* and her coachman

were suggested by Harpagon and Maître Jacques; Sir Thomas Rash is a variation of the hard-hearted father who attempts to force his daughter to marry for money; the impertinent maid-servant Isabella is copied from Dorine; and the two amorous, marriage-mad aunts are reminiscent of Bélise in *Les Femmes Savantes*. In technique also Crowne shows a careful study of Molière's methods. He imitates the French dramatist's use of staccato in dialogue, often with very good effect. At other times he employs dramatic heightening as a feature of his delineation of character, as in Sir Thomas Rash, in Lord Stately, and in Sir Courtly Nice. Molière's device of preparing the way thoroughly for the appearance of the principal character, and of delaying his entrance until the third act, Crowne finds useful in *Sir Courtly Nice*. In that same play he employs another trick of which Molière was fond—that of character contrast. Surly is introduced as an effective antithesis to Sir Courtly. There is a similar opposition in the characters of Hothead and Testimony. One is a rabid Tory, and the other a canting, hypocritical Presbyterian. Crowne owes a large debt to Molière both for material and for technical suggestions, but he is an apt disciple and adjusts his borrowings with careful workmanship. Thus in transferring the traits of Harpagon from *L'Avare* to Lady Pinch-gut in *The English Frier* he not only reproduces the comic incongruity of the original, but also utilizes his borrowings for his immediate purpose—satire upon the powers of the priesthood.¹⁵

Crowne's comic gift does not compare favorably with the light and graceful humor of Etherege, with the heavier masculine irony of Wycherley, or with the scintillating wit of Congreve; but we must grant him a genuine feeling for the incongruous, and a talent for writing satire, which, if caustic and coarse, is frequently very clever. The humor of his plays develops largely out of his characters. As we have seen, he brings opposites together for comic effect. Thus the presence of Surly in Sir Courtly's dressing room results in a truly humorous situation. Similarly the associating of Hothead and Testimony as guardians of Leonora's virtue is fraught with comic possibilities.

In his satirical touches Crowne is equally happy. The parsimonious nature of Lady Pinch-gut becomes very laughable when she is confronted with her coachman. The exposure of Father Finical's sensuality also must have afforded pleasure to good Protes-

¹⁵ Cf. Miles, *op. cit.*, pp. 95, 119, 130-131, 142, 146-147, 158, 165, 193.

tant theatre-goers just as Craffy's characterization of Dr. Panchy must have delighted the Tories. The unscrupulous lawyers of the day are entertainingly exposed in the character of Bartoline. The rôle is effective in spite of Crowne's exploitation of Bartoline's physical defects. Yet Crowne's range of satire is not entirely limited to political and religious figures. Sir Mannerly Shallow's comments on heroic drama are much to the point.

The dialogue of Crowne's comedies is fluent and generally well suited to his characters, but there is no attempt consistently to heighten it for theatrical effects. It is likely, as Miles suggests, that Crowne "did not share the prevalent admiration for the incessant cackling of similitude and paradox."¹⁶

It is a commonplace of literary criticism to say that the comedy of the Restoration period is notoriously immoral. Lamb's notion that the characters of this comedy "have got out of Christendom into the land of—what shall I call it?—of cuckoldry—the Utopia of gallantry, whose pleasure is duty, and the manners perfect freedom,"¹⁷ was long ago exploded by Macaulay, who has shown that this same comedy holds up the mirror to life as it then existed and is an authentic document of Restoration society.¹⁸ At the close of the seventeenth century the inevitable reaction set in. In 1697 Richard Blackmore, in the preface to his heroic poem, *King Arthur*, after praising Congreve's *Mourning Bride* for its modesty and chaste diction, hopes "that hereafter no slovenly Writer will be so hardy as to offer to our Publick Audiences his obscene and prophane Pollutions, to the great Offence of all Persons of Vertue and good Sense." "The common Pretence that the Audience will not be otherwise pleas'd," he continues, "is now wholly remov'd; for here is a notorious Instance to the contrary. And it must be look'd on hereafter as the Poet's fault, and not the People's, if we have not better Performances. All men must now conclude that 'tis for want of Wit and Judgment to support them that our Poets for the Stage apply themselves to such low and unworthy ways to recommend their Writings; and therefore I cannot but conceive Great Hopes that every good Genius for the future will look on it self debas'd by condescending to Write in that lewd Manner, that has been of late years introduc'd, and too long en-

¹⁶ Miles, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

¹⁷ Charles Lamb, *On the Artificial Comedy of the Last Century*, ed. by Brander Matthews, p. 152.

¹⁸ Macaulay, *Comic Dramatists of the Restoration. Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*, IV, 24-25.

courag'd. And if this comes to pass the Writers of the late Reigns will be asham'd of their Works, and wish they had their Plays in again as well as their fulsome Dedications."¹⁹ It is significant that Crowne should have felt called upon to reply to Blackmore's impersonal attack. In his preface to *Caligula* (1698) he writes: "I am sorry that the learned author of King Arthur, who labours so commendably for virtue and morality in plays, should set an ill example, and injure truth and the reputation of his brethren. Many of my plays have been successful, and yet clean. *Sir Courtly Nice* was as fortunate a comedy as has been written in this age; and Sir Courtly is as nice and clean in his conversation as in his diet and dress. And Surly, though he affects ill manners in everything else, is not guilty of obscene talk."²⁰

In his considerations of *The English Frier*, Grosse quotes Crowne's assertion in the epilogue that

"To revive English virtue, drive away

Folly and vice, is aim'd at in this play,"²¹

and concludes, "Hierin ist Crownes Bedeutung nicht zu unterschätzen; er ist ein Vorkämpfer Steeles und der Schriftsteller Blackmore und Collier."²² If Crowne had been conscious that his *English Frier* anticipated Blackmore in declaring war upon the obscenity and immorality of the stage, we may feel sure that he would have taken due credit to himself in his reply, but he is strangely silent about the moral qualities of all his comedies except *Sir Courtly Nice*, and merely expresses his regret that in one of his tragedies he "made too beautiful an image of an Atheist." Indeed, there is a reason for his failure to refer to *The English Frier*. Though his purpose in this play is "to revive *English* virtue, drive away Folly and vice" by caustic satire against the priesthood,—in common with other writers of comedy, he has the double intention of producing pleasure as well as profit. As he says in the prologue:

"All sects and parties lend him stuff for plays,
And his delight, though not his fortune raise.
Goods borrowed thus he does not long retain,
But on the stage brings fools and knaves again
To those that lent 'em, that they may have use,
Profit and pleasure of their own produce."²³

¹⁹ Richard Blackmore, *King Arthur. An Heroick Poem.* Preface, pp. vii-viii.

²⁰ *Works*, IV, 353.

²¹ *Works*, IV, 121.

²² Grosse, p. 72.

²³ *Works*, IV, 27.

Thus Crowne's open exposure of Father Finical's hypocrisy, avarice, and sensuality is intended as much to delight the audience as to reveal the friar's vices.

An examination of *The Countrey Wit*, *City Politiques*, *The English Frier*, and *The Married Beau* leads me to reject Grosse's charitable conclusion that "Crowne ist moralisch und will es sein"²⁴ and his further italicized assertion that "den Lustspielen Crownes liegt so eine sittliche Idee zu Grunde."²⁵ So far as I can see, there is no moral idea behind *City Politiques*. The Whig leaders are made the butt of ridicule entirely on political grounds. Furthermore, when the immoral relations of Florio and Rosaura are exposed at the end of the play, the pair are defiant and continue their lewd course. There is nothing moral in this, surely! The dénouement of *The Married Beau* is likewise immoral, but for other reasons. In altering the tragic ending of Cervantes' novel for purposes of comedy, Crowne leaves the vain, affected Mr. Lovely hoodwinked to the close as to the chastity of his wife, and reforms the repentant Mrs. Lovely and the rakish Polidor; but in making this change he ignores the logical consequences which should follow their action, and produces an effect more vicious than the open parading of Mrs. Lovely's seduction. In the other two comedies which we are here considering, vice is not triumphant, but it is displayed in and for itself. Ramble in *The Countrey Wit* preserves the rakish tenor of his way until the last act, when it is necessary for him to reform to win Christina. In this he differs not at all from the even more rakish Dorimant in Etherege's *Sir Fopling Flutter*. In the case of *The English Frier*, we have already seen that Crowne took particular delight in exposing openly the sensuality of Father Finical. He even adapted a very clever scene from Molière for that express purpose. If Crowne had really been a forerunner of Blackmore, Collier, and Steele in the fight against immorality and obscenity, his work would assume a place of large significance in the history of the English drama, but we cannot follow Grosse to this conclusion. Crowne's comedies are less immoral than those of many of his contemporaries, but he could not escape the demands of a public which delighted in the mirror-like reproduction of its vices; and, however moral his purpose may

²⁴ Grosse, p. 92.

²⁵ Grosse, p. 93.

have been, he certainly pandered at times to the vicious taste of the age.²⁶

Critical opinions of Crowne's merits as a comic poet vary considerably. Maidment and Logan thought that "as a writer of Comedies he is the superior of Dryden, who in no one instance produced anything to be compared to *Sir Courtly Nice*."²⁷ Dr. Ward is more severe in his judgment. "As a writer of comedy," he says, "Crowne is in my opinion entitled to no high rank His comic dialogue is fluent both in prose and verse But his range of characters is limited, and no great vigour of humour signalises even the special type produced by him and varied in several of his plays."²⁸ Yet in his employment of a limited circle of characters, we must add in fairness to Crowne, he exhibits a fault almost universal in Restoration comedy until the time of Vanbrugh and Farquhar. The criticism of Garnett is in my opinion more just. He finds "the success of his [Crowne's] comedies . . . less difficult to understand. Here he really gave the public a fair reflection of itself and exhibited contemporary manners with truth, if with no great brilliancy He created a real type in the exquisite coxcomb, *Sir Courtly Nice*."²⁹ Crowne is distinctly the inferior of Etherege, Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh and Farquhar, but he is entitled to a place in the second rank with Shadwell and Mrs. Behn.

III. CROWNE AS A POET.

As we survey the works of Crowne at the close of our study, the fact becomes increasingly clear that he was a poet by force of circumstance, rather than by any inner necessity for literary expression. Had the American estate of his father been free from the unscrupulous control of Thomas Temple, and had international treaties been more considerate of the rights of individuals, John Crowne, by his own confession, would not have "run into that Madness call'd Poetry," or have inhabited "that Bedlam call'd a Stage."³⁰ "Fame built on Poetry," he says, "is like a Castle in the Air, which the next Wind demolishes No wise Man can much regard what his share is in such a barren and floating

²⁶ Miles, p. 193, is of a contrary opinion. Crowne, he thinks was "too conscientious to pander to the tastes of his audiences by imprudent intrigue or indecent wit." A glance at *City Politiques* should be sufficient to settle this point.

²⁷ *Works*, I, xvii.

²⁸ Ward, *op. cit.*, III, 404.

²⁹ Garnett, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

³⁰ *Henry the Sixth, the First Part*. Dedication.

Place."⁸¹ From the first Crowne's muse was commercial, and even in later years she

"Kept shop, like a good creditable cit,

But traded in damn'd never thriving wit."⁸²

He is not, as Grosse would have us believe, the first who consciously approaches the idea of improving the moral quality of comedy, nor is he important as a reformer of public taste.⁸³ He is noteworthy rather as a writer of distinctly second-rate talent whose works run the gamut of all the types of drama then in vogue. Since his first aim was to make a living, he was a keen observer of the conditions of the time and followed the taste of his public with an eye to the ultimate returns. Thus a study of his dramas gives us a clearer insight into the requirements of Restoration audiences than are revealed in the works of men of greater genius. By virtue of patient industry, he became a skillful workman, and in his tragedies he substituted cleverness in adaptation and construction of plots for the richer power to characterize well and write memorable lines. He was much more at home in comedy, where he possessed a small but natural gift. He went to school to Molière for much of his technique, and in his lighter dramas he mirrored the follies and vices of his time with admirable faithfulness, if with no great brilliancy.

As a political and religious satirist, Crowne is frequently coarse and abusive, but at other times he shows a firm grasp of his material and is clever in his hits. The poetry of his serious dramas is almost entirely lacking in inspiration, beauty, or breadth of vision. In the prose dialogue of his comedies, however, he is fluent if not sparkling, and the easy flowing blank verse of his only poetical comedy is better than the great bulk of his work. Finally, Crowne deserves mention, in a period comparatively barren of lyrical melody, as a writer of several songs of genuine inspiration.

⁸¹ *Henry the Sixth, the First Part*. Dedication.

⁸² *Works*, III, 376.

⁸³ Grosse, pp. 112-113.

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